PHILOMELA.

THE LADY FITZVVA-
ters Nightingale.

By Robert Greene.

Vtriuſque Academiæ in Artibus magiſter.

Seroſed ſerio.

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of Paules. 1592.

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To the right honourable the Lady Bridget Ratliffe, Lady Fitzwaters : Robert Greene, wisheth increase of honor and vertue.

RIght beautifull and bountiful Lady, finding my selfe humbly deuoted to the Right honourable the Lord Fitzwaters your husband, not onely that I am borne his, but also for the gracious acceptaunce of a small Pamphlet written by an other, and presented to him by me, I endeuored any way and euery way that I might, to discouer my affectionate dutie to him by some scoller-like labours that I began to tosse ouer the first frutes of my witts wrapt vp as scollers treasurs be, in loose papers that I might sift out some thing worthie his honor, but finding all worthlesse of his Lordship, at last I lighted vpon this fiction of Venetian Philomela which I had writen long since & kept charily being pend at the request of a Counteesse in this land to approue wemens chastitie, assone as I had red it ouer and reduced it into forme lickinge it a lyttle as the beares doe their whelpes to bring them to perfection, I haue resolued to make good my duty to his Lordship in doing homage with my simple labours to your Ladiship knowing seruice don to the wife is gratefied in the husband) whereupon I presume to present the dedication of chast Philomela to your honor and to christen it in your Ladiships name, calling it the Ladye Fitzwaters Nightingalle as if I

ſhould inſinuate a compariſon twixt you and him of equall and honorable vertues. Imitating heerin Maiſter *Abraham France*, who titled the Lamentations of *Amintas* vnder the name of the Counteſſe of Penbrookes *Iuie Church*: for heerein your Ladyſhip had farre more perfections then yeres & more inward excelence then externe beutie, yet ſo beutiful as few ſo fair though none more vertuous, I thought the legand of an honorable and chaſte Ladie. Would be gratefull to your honour whoſe mind is wholy delighted in chaſt thoughts, keping hercin a perfect decorũ to appropriat the nature of the gift to the cõtent of the perſon. For ſuch as offer incence to Venus burn mirr mixed with Eringion. Thoſe that glory Pallas giue her a ſhield: Dians preſent a bow: witty poemes are fitt for wiſe heades and examples of honor for ſuch as triumphe in vertue ſo that ſeing there hath few led more chaſte then an Italian Philomela I thought none only more fitt to patronyſe her honors then your Ladyſhip whoſe chaſtety is as far ſpred as you are eyther knowne or ſpoken of, yf then my well meaning may not be miſconſtrued but my preſumptiõ pardoned and my labours fauered with your gratious acceptation I haue what I aimed at and what I expected, in the hope of which courteſie ſetting downe my reſt I humbly take my leaue.

Your Ladyſhipps in all
dutifull ſeruice
Robart Greene.

TO THE GENTLEMEN READers, Health.

IF the contents of lines could at life discouer the coller of the face, you should gentlemen see my rudy cheekes manyfest my open folies, but seing paper cannot blush, I wil confese my falt & so hũbly craue pardon I promised gentlemẽ, both in my Mourning Garment *&* Farwell to Folies *neuer to busie my selfe about any wanton pamphlets again, nor to haue my braine counted so adle as to sett out any matter that were amorous, but yet am I com contrary to vow and promise once againe to the presse with a labour of loue which I hatched long agoe, though now brought fourth to light. If the printer had not bene I would haue had it thrust out as an orphant without any name to father it: but at his earnest intreatie I was content to subscribe, though I abide your hard censures and angrie frownes for a penance. Therefore sith the worke was writ afore my vow and published vppon duty to so honorable and bewtifull a Lady: I humbly sue for fauour, and craue that you will beare with this fault, and hold me euery way excused: which courtesie if you grant me I haue more than I deserue, and as much as my desire euerie way can wish, and so farewell.*

Yours, Robert Greene.

The Lady Fitz-waters
Nightingale.

THere dwelled in the Cittie of Venice nære the Rialto, an Earle of great excellence, both for the descent of his parentage, and largenesse of his patrimonie, called Il Conte Phillippo Medico, a gentleman euery way, not onelie by birth: as being by the mothers side of the Æmilii, but euerie waie furnisht with ciuill vertues for peace, and martiall vallour for the warres as polliticke at home as resolute abroad: reuerenst of all, not for his gray heares for he was yoong, but for his many vertues wherein he ouerwent men of age. This Conte Phillippo hadde by the fauour of Fortune and his owne forecight, linked himselfe to a yonge Gentlewoman in mariage called Phylomela Celii, at that time the woonder of Venice, not for hir beauty, though Italie affoorded none so faire, nor for hir dowrie, though she were the only daughter of the Duke of *M*illain: but for the admyrable honors of hir mind, which were so many and matchlesse, that vertue seemed to haue planted there the paradise of hir perfections: hir age exceeded not xvii. yet appeared there such a simmetry of more then womanly excellence in euery action of this Venetian paragon that Italie held hir life as an instance of all commendable qualities: she was modest without sullennesse, and silent not as a foole, but because she would not be counted a blab: chast, and yet not coy, for the poorest of all held hir courteous: though she was yoong, yet she desired neyther to gad nor to gase, nor

to haue hir beautie made common to euery bad compa-
nions eie. the vale she vsed for hir face was the couert of
hir owne house: for she neuer woulde goe abroad but in
the company of hir husband, and then with such bashful-
nesse, that she seemed to hold hir selfe faultie in stepping
beyond the shadow of hir owne mansion: thus was Phi-
lomela famous for hir exquisite vertues, and Philippo
fortunate for enioyeng so vertuous a paramour. But as
there is no Antidot so pretious but being tempered with
Antimonie is infectious: nor no hart so seueraign good,
but art can make simply ill, so Phillippo was not so cō-
mendable for some good parts, as afterwards bad thoght
of for some vnworthy qualities. For though hee had a
wife euery way answerable to his owne wish, both fair
to please his eie, and honest to content his humor, yet in
seeking to quittance these vertues with loue, he so ouer-
loued hir, that he plagued hir more with iélousy then re-
compenst hir with affection, insomuch that with a deepe
insight entring into the consideration of hir beawty and
hir youth, he began to suspect that such as frequented his
house for traffike (for the greatest meane in Venice bred
marchandise) were rather drawne thither by a desire to
see his wife then for the speciall vse of any other his com-
modities. Féeding vpon this passion that gnaweth like
enuy vpon hir owne flesh, he called to minde to which of
his friends she shewed the most gratious lookes, vppon
whom she glaunst the most smiling fauours, whose car-
ver she would be at the table, to whom she would drink,
and who had most curteous intertainment at hir hands,
these men he did both suspect and enuy, as those to whom
he thought his wife for those granted fauours most affec-
tionate. Yet when he called to mind hir chast vertues,
and did ruminate the particularities of his loues toward
himselfe, he suppressed the suspitious flame of ielousy with
the assured proofs of hir inuinsyble chastity, hammering
these betwixt fears and hope he built castles in the ayre

and

and reacht beyonde the moone: one while ſwearing all women were falſe and inconſtant, and then againe proteſting if all were ſo, yet not all bicauſe Philomela was not ſo: In this gealous quandary hee vſed to himſelfe this quaint diſcourſe. If loue bee a bleſſing Philippo as yet proues in the ende moſt bitter, howe bleſt are they that neuer make trial of ſo ſower a ſwéet, a child ſtunge with a bée will fly from the hunnicombe, ſuch as are bytten with vipers, will feare to ſleepe on the graſſe: but men toucht with the inconuenience of fancie, hunt with ſighes to enrich themſelues with that paſſion: what conqueſt haue ſuch as win faire women? Euen the like victorie that Alexander had in ſubduing the Scythians reconciled friendes, whoe the more they flattered him the more he miſtruſted. Beauty is like the herbe Larix, cole in the water but hot in the ſtomach: pretious while it is a bloſſome, but preiudiciall grown to a frute: a iem not ſo be valued if ſet in vertue, but diſgraſt with a bad foile like a ring of gold in a ſwines ſnowt: yet what comfort is there in life if man had no ſolace: but man, women are ſwéet helpes and thoſe kind creatures that god made to perfect vp mens excellence. Truth Philippo they bee wonders of nature, if they wrong not nature: and admirable angels if they would not be drawn with augels to become deuils. Oh flatter not thy ſelfe in flattering them for where they find ſubmiſſion, there they proclaim contempt: and if thou makeſt them thy mate, they wil giue thee ſuch a checkmate that happyly thou ſhalt liue by the loſſe all thy life after: what nads this inuective humor againſt women, when thou haſt ſuch a wife as euery way is abſolute both for beauty and vertue? let ſuch as haue béene ſtung with the ſcorpion be warnd, ſpeak then as thou findeſt, and then thou wilte ſay that women are creatures as excellent in minde, as they bee ſingular in complexion: as farre beyond men in inward vertues, as they excéd men in exterior beauties I grant al this, yet Philippo the iuice of ỹ Helleborens is poiſon, the gráner

the Aliſander leaues bee, the more bitter is the ſappe, euery outward appearaunce is not an authenticall inſtance, women haue chaſt eies when they haue wanton thoughts, and modeſt lookes when they harbour laſciuious wiſhes: the Eagle when he ſoareth nereſt to the ſonne, then he houers for his preie, the Salamander is moſt warme when hee lieth furtheſt from the fire, and then are women moſt hartholowe when they are moſt lip-holie, and by theſe premiſſes, Philippo, argue of thy wiues preciſeneſſe, for though ſhe ſeeme chaſt, yet maye ſhe ſecretly delight in chaunge, and though hir countenaunce be coy to all, yet hir conſcience may be courteous to ſome one, when the ſonne ſhines moſt garith it foreſhewes a ſhower, when the birds ſing earlye, there is a ſtorme before night, womens flatteries are no more to bee truſted than Aſtronomers Almanackes, that proclaimeth that for a moſt faire daye that procures moſt clowdye, and ſo of Philomela. As thus the Countie Philippo was iarring with himſelf about this humor of iealouſie, there came to him while hee ſate (for all this while hee was in an Arbour in his Garden) a familiar friend of his called Signeor Giouanni Luteſio, ſo priuate vnto the Earle in all his ſecrete affaires, that hee concealed nothing from him which came within the compaſſe of his thoughts, this Signeor Giouanni ſeeing the Countie in a brown ſtudy, wakened him of his muſe with a merrie greeting, and bad a pennie for his thought: the Earle ſeeing his ſecond ſelfe, his onely repoſitorie of his priuate paſſions, entertayned him very curteouſly, and after ſome familiar ſpeeches had betwixt them, Giouan began to queſtion what the cauſe was of that melancholie dumpe that he found him in: the Earle fetching a great ſigh, taking Luteſio by the hand, ſetting him downe by him, began to rehearſe from point to point what a iealious ſuſpition hee had of his wiues beautie, and that for all the ſhew of hir honeſtie, he ſomwhat doubted of hir

chaſtitie.

chastitie. Giouanni who with a reuerent loue fauoured the Countesse, beganne somewhat sharpely to reproue the Earle, that hée should admit of so foolishe a passion as iealousie, and misconster of hir whose vertuous life was so famous through al Venice: As suspicious heads want not sophistrie to supplie their mistrust, so Philip at that time was not barren of arguments to proue the subtiltie of women, their inconstancie, how they wer faced like Ianus, hauing one full of furrowes, the other of smiles, swearing hée should neuer bée merrie at his hart, till hée had made an assured proofe of hir chastitie, and with that he broke with Signeor Giouanni Lutesio, that he should be the man to make experience of hir honestie, although the Gentleman were very vnwilling to take such a taske in hande, doubting least in dallieng with the flame, hée might burne his fingar, and so iniurie his friende, yet at the importunat intreatie of Philippo, he promised to vndertake the matter, and by all meanes possible to assault the inuincible Fort of hir chastitie, protesting that if hée found hir pliant to listen to his passions, he would make it manifest to him without dissembling, Philippo glad of this, to graunt Giouanni opportunitie to court his wife, would bée more often abroad, and that he might driue hir the sooner to listen vnto his sute, hée vsed not that woonted loue and familiaritye that hée was accustomed to doe, but quitted all hir dutifull fauours with vncouth and disdaynfull frownes, so that poore Philomela who knew nothing of this compacted trecherie, began to woonder what had altered hir husbands woonted humour, and like a good wife she began to examin hir own conscience, wherein she had giuen him any occasion of offense, feeling hir selfe guiltlesse (vnlesse his own conceit deceiued him) shee imagined that hir husbande affected some other Ladie more than hir selfe, which imagination she concealed with patience, and resolued not by reuealing it, to retriue him from his newe intertained fancie,

but with obedience, loue, and silence, to recouer his Philippo to fauor none but his Philomela. While thus his minde a little suspitious began to wauer, Lutesio began to lay his baites to betray this sillie innocent. Nowe you muste imagine hée was a yong Gentleman of a good house, of no meane wealth, nor any way made infortunate by nature, for hee was counted the moste fine and courtly Gentleman in al Venice. This Lutesio therfore séeking fit opportunitie to find Madame Philomela in a merrie vaine (for Time is called that Cappillata Ministra, that fauours Louers in their fortunes) watched so narrowly, that he found the Countesse sitting al alone in his Garden, plaieng vpon a Lute many prettie Roundelaies, Borginets, Madrigals, and such pleasant Lessons, al as it were amorous loue vowed in honour of Venus, singing to his Lute many prettie and merie ditties, some of his owne composing, and some written by some wittie Gentlemen of Venice, thinking now time had smiled vpon him by putting his in such an humorous veine. At last he heard his warble out this pleasant Ode.

Philomelas Ode that she sung in hir Arbour.

SItting by a riuer side,
Where a silent streame did glide.
Muse I did of many things,
That the mind in quiet brings.
I gan thinke how some men deeme,
Gold their god, and some esteeme
Honour is the cheefe content,
That to man in life is lent.
And some others doe contend,
Quiet none like to a friend.

Others

Others hold there is no welth
Compared to a perfit helth.
Some mans mind in quiet ſtands,
When he is Lord of many lands.
But I did ſigh, and ſayd all this
Was but a ſhade of perfit blis.
And in my thoughts I did approue,
Nought ſo ſweet as is true loue.
Loue twixt Louers paſſeth theſe,
When mouth kiſſeth and hart grees.
With folded armes and lippes meeting,
Each ſoule another ſweetly greeting.
For by the breath the ſoule fleeteth,
And ſoule with ſoule in kiſſing meeteth.
If Loue be ſo ſweet a thing,
That ſuch happie bliſſe doth bring,
Happie is Loues ſugred thrall,
But vnhappie maidens all.
Who eſteeme your Virgins bliſſes,
Sweeter than a wiues ſweet kiſſes.
No ſuch quiet to the mind,
As true loue with kiſſes kind.
But if a kiſſe proue vnchaſt,
Then is true loue quite diſgraſt,
Though loue be ſweet, learne this of me,
No Loue ſweet but honeſtie.

As ſoone as Philomela had ended hir Ode, Signior Luteſio ſtept to hir and halfe mard hir melody with this vnlookt for motion: I am glad Madam to find you ſo ful of glee, womens minds ſet on mirth, ſhews their thoghts are at quiet, when Birdes ſing early there hath bene a ſweet dcaw, ſo your morninges Antheme ſhewes your nightes content, the ſubiect of your ſong, and the cenſure of my thoughtes argue vpon concluſion, for lykelye it is you haue founde kiſſing ſweete that ſo highlye commend

mend it, but as the old prouerbe is, such laugh as win, and such as ends fauours may affoord hir incense, loue is pretious to such as possesse their loue, but there is no hell if loue bee not hell to such as dare not expresse their passions. Philomela seing Lutesio tooke hir napping in singing so merry an Ode shewed in the blush of hir cheeks the bashfulnesse of hir thoughts, yet knowing he was hir husbands familiar she cared the lesse, and smiling made him this pleasant answere. Signior Lutesio as I relisht a wanton song at randon, so I little lookt your ears should haue beene troubled with my musicke, but since you are a hearer of my hoarse dittie, take it as you finde it and conster of it as you please, I know mine own mening best. In that I commend kissing, it argues me the more kind and my husband the more louing in that I find lip loue so sweet, women may be wantons in their husbands, yet not immodest: & wiues are allowed to sport so their dallieng be not dishonest: yet had I knowne you had beene so nie, I woulde haue byn more silent, and at this word she blusht againe, discouering by hir lookes it greeued hir any man (though neuer so familiar) should heare hir so extraordinary pleasant: but to finde fishe in Signior Lutesios fingers, because hes glaunst at disdain in loue she followed hir reply thus: yet since sir what is past cannot bee recalde, I will ouerslippe the conceit of mine own folly, and be so bold as to haue you vnder confession. What is the reason Lutesio you diuersitie descant of the fruition of loue, hath that diuine passion crept into your braines? Giouanni hearing hir harpe on that string strained it a pin higher thus. Deuine passion call you it Madam, nay rather a fury fetcht from hel, a madnesse hzued in the bosome of Tesiphon, an vnbzideled desire, a restlesse agony, a continuall anguish, thus doo I value loue, because my life is at an end by the wzonges of loue: such as are poisoned with rugwozt count it fatal yet suche as haue the plurisie dzinke it in potions the

mercu-

Mercuriall Moti was very much commended of Vlisses though condemned of Cyres: mens poems followe their passions, and they conclude as they are contented: then Madam if all the worlde say loue is a Heauen, yet must I say desire is a hell: not that the bewteous saint, whom mnie eye doth worship, and my hart doth honour, hath quitted my affection with disdaine: but that in not daring discouer my passions, I am put to a triple tormẽting penannce. At this he fetcht such a fained sigh, that simple meaning Philomela imagined the Gentleman was full of sorrow, and therefore began to comfort him thus. Why Signior Lutesio haue you soared so high, that you doubt the scorching of your fethers? hath your desires taken flight so far aboue your degrée, that you feare a fall? is the Ladie whom you loue so great of byrth, that you dare not be your owne broaker? Loue Lutesio if honest, is lawfull and may reape disdain, but not disgrace. Desire is the daughter of destinie, and the simpathie of affections is forepointed by the starres: Woemens eies are not tied to high personages, but to exquisite perfections: and the greater oft times they be in degrées, the lower they proue in loues: be she then Lutesio, the statelieft, the richeft, the faireft in all Italie, feare not to court her: for happily she may grant, and shee at the worst can but say no: When I entered into thy wonted humours, how honestly wanton thou hast bẽn amongst women of high accompt: when I thinke of thy wealth, of thy vertues, of thy parentage, of thy person: I flatter not Lutesio, for in my opinion a frumpe amongst friends is pettie treason in effect, I cannot but wonder what she is that Lutesio dares not tell he loues, if without offence I may craue it, tell me her name, that I may censure of her qualities: Lutesio with a face full of discontent, made her this answere: Madame as I dare not discourse my loues, so I will not discouer her name: I regard her honour as my life, and therfore onely suffice it, I am as far

vnworthy of her as she is beyond my reach to compasse. Philomela who straight found the knot in the rush, began to imagine that it was some married wife that Lutesio aimed at: and therfore charged him by the loue that he bare to Philippo Medico, that he would tell hir whether it was a wife or a mayd that' hée thus earnestly affected. Lutesio briefly tolde her that she was not onely a wife, but maide to one whome shée almost as tenderly loued as he did the Earle her husband: A Ladie of honour and vertue, yet a woman, and therefore hée hoped might be wonne if his heart woulde serue him to be a woer. Philomela hearing this, began to finde a knot in the rush, and to déeme that it was some familiar of hys that he was affected to: and therfore with a gentle frowne, as if shee loued him, and yet mislikte of his fondnesse in fancie, taking him by the hand, she began thus to schoole him.

Lutesio, nowe I sée the strongest Oake hath his sap, and his wormes: that Rauens will bréed in the fairest Ash, and that the masked Angelica beares a deaw, that shining like pearle, being tasted is most preiuditiall: that the holiest men in shew are oft the hollowest men in substance, and where there is the greatest florish of vertue, there in time appeareth the greatest blemish of vanitie. I speake this by all, but apply it to them who séeming euery way absolute, will proue euerie way dissolute. Hath not Venice held thée more famous for thy good partes than for thy parentage? and yet well borne, and valued the more for liuing well than wealthely: and yet thy patrimonie is not small. Oh Lutesio darken not these honours with dishonestie, nor for the foolish and fading passion of lust, reach not at an everlasting pennance of infamie. As I mislike of thy choyce, so I can but wonder at thy change to sée thée altered in maners, that wert earst so modest, who was estéemed amongst Ladies for his ciuill conceites as Lutesio? thou wert wished for a-

mongeſt the chaſteſt for thy choyce qualities, amongeſt youth for thy wit, amongeſt age for thy honeſt behaujor, deſired of all becauſe offenſiue to none: and nowe if thou proſecute this bad purpoſe, intend this baſe loue, to violate the honour of a Venetian Ladie, looke to be hated of all that are vertuous becauſe thou art growne ſo ſodainly vicious, and to be baniſhed out of the companie of all that are honeſt becauſe thou ſeekeſt to make one diſhoneſt: then as thou loueſt thy fame leaue off this loue, and as thou valueſt thine honour, ſo vale the appetite of thy diſhoneſt thoughtes. Beſides Lucrio enter into the conſideration of the fault, and by that meaſure what will be the ſequell of thy folly: thou attempteſt to diſhonour a wife, nay the wife of thy friend: in doing this thou ſhalt loſe a ſweete companion, and purchaſe thy ſelfe a fatall enemie: thou ſhalt diſpleaſe God and grow odious to men: hazard the hope of thy grace, and aſſure thy ſelfe of the reward of ſinne, adulterie: Lucrio is commended in none, condemned in all, and punniſhed in the end either with this woꝛldes infamie oꝛ heauens anger: it is a deſire without regard of honeſtie, and a gaine with greater reward of miſerie: a pleaſure bought with paine, a delight hatched with diſquiet, a content poſſeſſed with feare, and a ſinne finiſhed with ſoꝛrowe. Barbarous nations puniſhe it with death: meere Atheiſtes in Religion auoid it by inſtinct of nature, ſuch as glory God with no honoꝛ, couet to glorifie themſelues with honeſty, and wilt thou that art a Chriſtian than crucifie Chriſt anew, by making the harbour of thy ſoule the habitation of Satan? Oh Lucrio as thou bluſheſt at my woꝛdes, ſo banniſh thy bad thoughts, and being created by God, ſeeke not to deſpiſe thy creatoꝛ in abuſing his creatures: A womans honeſtie is her honour, and her honour the chiefeſt eſſence of her life: then in ſeeking to blemiſhe her vertues with luſt, thou aymeſt at no leſſe diſgrace than her death: and yet Lucrio

this is not all, for in winning her loue, thou looſeſt a friend: than which, there is nothing more pretious, as there is nothing more rare: as Corruptio vnius eſt generatio alterius: ſo the loſſe of a friend is the purchaſe of an enemie and ſuch a mortall foe as will apply all his wittes to thy wracke, intrude all his thoughtes to thy ruine, and paſſe away his daies, cares, and nights ſlumbers, in dreaming of thy deſtruction. For if brute beaſts will reuenge ſuch brutiſh wrongs as adultery, then imagine no man to be ſo patient, that will ouerpaſſe ſo groſſe an iniurie: aſſure thy ſelfe of this Luteſio, if her huſband heare of your loues, he will aime at your liues: he will leaue no confection vntempered, no poyſon vnſearcht, no mynerall vntried, no Aconiton vnbruſed, no hearbe, tree, roote, ſtone, ſimple or ſecret vnſought, till reuenge hath ſatiſfied the burning thirſt of his hate: ſo ſhalt thou feare with whom to drincke, with whome to conuerſe, when to walke, how to performe thy affaires, onely for doubt of her reuenging huſband, and thy proteſted enemie. If ſuch vnlawfull luſt, ſuch vnkinde deſires, ſuch vnchaſt loue procure ſo great loſſe, and ſo many perils reuert it Luteſio as a paſſion moſt pernitious, as a ſhine moſt odious, and a gaine moſt full of deadly ſorrowes. Though this be much Luteſio, yet this is not all: for many loue that are neuer liked, and euerie one that woes is not a winner: Diuers deſire with hope, and yet their wiſhes are to ſmall effect: ſuppoſe the Ladie whome thou loueſt is honeſt: then is thy loue as vnlikely as Ixions was to Iuno: who aiming at the ſubſtaunce was made a foole with a ſhadow. I tell thee it is more eaſie to cut a Diamond with a glaſſe, to pearce ſteele with a fether, to tye an Elephant with a thread of ſilke, than to alienate an honeſt womans loue from her huſband, their heartes be harbours of one loue, cloſets of one contents, Celles, whereinto no amorous Idea but one can enter, as hard to be pearſt with new fangled affection as the Adamant

to

to be made ſoft with fire. A Ladie Luteſio that regardeth her honour wil die with Lucrece before ſhe agrée to luſt, ſhe will eate coales with Portia before ſhe prone vnchaſt, ſhe will thinke euerie miſerie ſwéet, euery miſhappe content, before ſhe condiſcend to the allurementes of any wanton leacher. Imagine then her whome thou loueſt to be ſuch a one: then will it qualifie thy hope, cole thy deſires, and quench thoſe vnbridled thoughtes that leades thée on to ſuch follies: for if ſhe be a wanton, what doeſt thou winne her that many hath worne, and more than thy ſelfe may vanquiſh? a light huſwife and a lewd minion, that after ſhe hath yéelded the flower of her loue Theſius will marrie with Menelaus, and then runne away with Paris: amorous to euerie one becauſe ſhee is humorous to all: Then Luteſio ſéeing, if thou likeſt an honeſt Ladie, thy loue is paſt hope: and if thou woeſt a wanton, thou ſhalt gain but what others haue left: leaue both and become as hitherto thou haſt béen an honeſt gentleman in all mens opinions, ſo ſhalt thou liue well thought of, and die honourably: and with that, ſmiling ſhe aſked him, if ſhe had not plaied the preacher well. But Luteſio wondering at her vertues, made no anſwer he was ſo amaſed: but reſted ſilent, which Philomela perceiuing, to waken him out of his dumpe, ſhe tooke againe her Lute in her hand, and began to ſing this following Dade.

Philomeloes ſecond Oade.

IT was froſtie winters ſeaſon,
And faire Floras wealth was geaſon:
Meades that earſt with greene were ſpred,
With choice flowers diapred:
Had tawny vales: Cold had ſcanted,
What the Springes and Nature planted:
Leaueleſſe bowes there might you ſee,

All except faire Daphnes tree,
On their twigges no byrdes pearched,
Warmer couerts none they ſearched:
And by Natures ſecret reaſon;
Framed their voyces to the ſeaſon:
With their feeble tunes bewraying,
How they greeued the ſprings decaying:
Froſtie Winter thus had gloomed,
Each faire thing that ſommer bloomed,
Fieldes were bare and trees vnclad,
Flowers withered, byrdes were had:
When I ſaw a ſhepheard fold,
Sheepe in Coate to ſhun the cold:
Himſelfe ſitting on the graſſe,
That with froſt withered was,
Sighing deepely thus gan ſay,
Loue is folly when a ſtray:
Like to loue no paſsion ſuch,
For his madneſſe if too much:
If too little, then diſpaire:
If too high, he beates the ayre:
With bootleſſe, if too low:
An Egle matcheth with a Crow.
Thence growes iarres thus I finde,
Loue is folly if vnkinde:
Yet do men moſt deſire,
To be heated with this fire:
Whoſe flame is ſo pleaſing hot,
That they burne, yet feele it not
Yet hath loue another kinde,
Worſe than theſe vnto the minde:
That is when a wantons eie,
Leades deſire cleade awrie.
And with the Bee doth reioyce,
Euery minute to change choyce,
Counting he were then in bliſſe,

If that ech faire fall were his:
Highly thus in loue diſgraſte
When the louer is vnchaſte:
And would taſt of fruit forbidden,
Cauſe the ſcape is eaſily hidden.
Though ſuch loue be ſweet in brewing,
Bitter is the end inſuing:
For the humor of loue he ſhameth,
And himſelfe with luſt defameth:
For a minutes pleaſure gayning,
Fame and honour euer ſtayning.
Gazing thus ſo farre awry,
Laſt the chip falles in his eie,
Then it burnes that earſt but heate him,
And his owne rod gins to beate him:
His choyceſt ſweetes turnes to gall,
He findes luſt is fins thrall:
That wanton women in their eyes,
Mens deceiuings do compriſe.
That homage done to faire faces,
Doth diſhonour other graces:
If lawleſſe loue be ſuch a ſinne,
Curſt is he that liues therein:
For the gaine of Venus game,
Is the downfall vnto ſhame:
Here he pauſd and did ſtay,
Sighed and roſe, and went away.

Aſſoone as Philomela had ended her Dade, ſhe ſmiled on Luteſio and ſaid, hoping then that this priuate conference ſhalbe a concluſion of your paſſions, and a finall reſolution to reuerſe your thoughts from this diſordinat folly of loue: I will at this time ceaſe to ſpeake anie more, becauſe I hope you will reſt from your motion: and ſo taking him by the hand, ſhee led him into the parler, where amongſt other company they paſt away ỳ day

in pleasant chat, till that Lutesio found conuenient opportunitie to discouer to Philippo the resolution of his wife, who thought euerie minute a moneth till hee had heard what answer she had made to Lutesio. At last they went both together walking into a garden that adioyned to the house of Philippo: and there Lutesio who reuealed from point to point what he had motioned a farre off to Philomela, and how honourably and honestly she replyed, rehearsing what a cooling card of good counsaile shee gaue him, able to haue quailed the hotest stomacke, or quenched the most eager flame that fancie could fire the mind of man withall: entring into a large and high commendation of the chastitie, wisedome, and generall vertues of Philomela, auerring that hee thought there was not a woman of more absolute qualities nor honorable disposition in al Italie. Philippo the more he drunk the more he thirsted, and the more he was perswaded to trust in her honestie, the more he was suspitious, and doubted of her vertue: for he replyed still in his ielous humour that womens words were no warrantes of their truth, that as the Onix is inwardly most cold, when it is outwardly most hot: so womens wordes are like the cries of Lapwings, farthest from their thoughts, as they are from their nests: they proclaime silence with their tongues, modestie with their eies, chastitie with their actions, when in their heartes they are plotting how to grant an amorous pleasure to their louers: Tush saies Philippo, womens tongues are tipt with deceite: they can sing with the Nightingale, though they haue a prick at their brests: they can lend him a cherrie lippe whome they heartily loathe, and fawne vpon her husbands neck when she giues her louer a wincke: Though my wife hath made a faire shewe of vertue, it is no authenticall proofe of hir honestie, either she mistrusted or misdoubted of your sorcerie, or els shee would seeme hard in the winning, that her chastitie might be holden the more

charis

charie for be ſhe neuer ſo wanton ſhe will ſéeme modeſt, and the moſt comman Curteſan will to a nouice ſeeme the moſt coy matron : they haue their countenance at command, their words at will, their oathes at pleſure, and all to ſhadow their ſcapes with the maſkes of vertue Rodope ſeemed coy to Pſanneticus, elſe had a courteſan neuer conquered a king. Hermia chaſte to *Ariſtotle*, elſe had ſhe not bewitcht a Philoſopher, Platoes ouerwarne trull true to him, elſe had ſhe not beene miſtreſſe of his thoughts. I tell thée Luteſio they haue more wiles then the ſunne hath beames to betray the ſimple mening of beſotted louers. Therefore though ſhe vttered a legend of good leſſons beléeue hir not. Though the Hare take ſquat ſhe is not loſt at the firſt defaulte, applye thy wits, try hir by letters, write paſſionatly and béere her anſwer, and aſſure thy ſelfe if thou cunningly caſt forth the lure ſhe will ſone be reclaimed to the fiſt. Thus importunate was Philippo vpon his friend Luteſio, that at the laſt he craued licenſe to depart for a while, leauinge philippo meditating of his melancholie while hee went into his chamber, where taking pen and paper he wrote philomela this cunning letter.

Luteſio to the fayreſt Philomela, wiſheth what he wants himſelfe.

IT is no woonder philomela if mennes mindes be ſubiect to loue, when their eyes are the inſtruments of deſire, nor is any blame worthy for affecting, when as the ſight of man is a ſenſe that vieweng euery thing muſte of force allow of ſome thinge, I ſpeake not

ſweet lady philoſophically as a ſcholler but paſſionately as a louer, whoſe eyes hath beene ſo lauiſh in ouer highe lookes, that eyther they muſt haue their longing or elſe I die through their ouerliking: for as too ſweet parfumes makes the ſenſe to ſurfet, and the moſt bright coulours ſoneſt blemiſh the ſight, ſo I in gaſing on the choiſe perfections of beauty, haue dazelled mine eies and fiered my hart with deſire, that none but the fruition of that bleſſed obiect, can ſaue me from being loues curſed abiect. Now Madam, the rare Idea that thus through the applauſe of mine eie hath bewitched my hart is the beauteous image of your ſweet ſelfe. Pardon me if I preſume, when the extremity of loue pricks me forward. Faults that grow by affection ought to bee forgiuen, bicauſe they come of conſtraint: then Madam read with fauour, and cenſure with mercy, for ſo long I dallied with the flie about the candle, that I began to feele ouer much heat, would breed my harme, I haue playd ſo long with the Mynew at the baite that I am ſtricken with the hooke: I haue viewed your beautye with ſuch delighte, and conſidered of your vertues with ſuch deſire, that in your gratious lookes lies the only hope of my life. Ah Philomela were not my loue extreame, my paſſions paſſing all meaſure, my affection to full of anguiſh: I woulde haue concealed my thoughts with ſilence, and haue ſmoothered my greefes with patience: but either I muſt liue by reuealing it, or die by repreſſing it: I feare thou wilte beare obiect Philippo is my friend, and then I am of little fayth to proffer him this wrong, I confeſſe this is a truth and were worthy of blame, were I not bewitcht by loue, whoe neyther admitteth exceptions of fayth or friendſhippe, if it be a paſſion that controuleth the Goddes, no wonder at all if it conquer and commande men. If ſonnes diſobey their Fathers to haue their deſires, it is more tollerable to crack friendſhip for the conqueſt of loue. Whie

then

then did Nature frame beawty to be so excellent, if she had tied the winning of it within exceptions. If that a friend may fault with his friend for a kingdom, no doubt fayth may be broken for loue, that is a great deale more puissant then Kinges and much more pretious then Diadems: chiefly if that the party be chary to haue regarde of his mystresse honour, what the eie sees not Phylomela neuer hurteth the heart, a secret loue impeacheth not chastitie. Iuno neuer frowned when Iupiter made his scape in a Cloude. Priuate pleasures haue neuer inioyned vnto them anye pennance, and shee is alwaies counted chast enough that is chary enoughe: then Madam let him not die for loue, whome if you please you may bleste with loue.

It may be you will replye, that Philippo is a Conte and a great deale my superiour and the supreame of your hart, therefore not to be wronged with an arrival. Consider Madame kinges doo brooke many vnknowne scapes: Loue will play the wanton amongest the greatest Lordes: Women are not made such chaste nunnes, but they may let much water slippe by the Mill that the Miller knoweth not of: They may loue their husband with one of their eies, and fauour a friende with the other. Since then Madam I haue bene stunge with the Scorpion, and cannot be helpt or healed by none but by the Scorpion: that I am wounded with Achilles launce and I must be healed with his Truncheon: that I am intangled and snared in your beautie, and must bee set at libertie onely by your loue. Looke vpon my passions and pyttie them, let me not die for desiring your sweete selfe but rather graunt me fauour, and enioy suche a loner, as will prise your honour before his life, and at all times be yours in all dutyfull seruice whilest hee liues: expecting such an answere as is agreeyng to such diuine beawtie, which cannot bee cruell or according vnto

my destinie, which be it sinister wilbe my death, farwel.

Yours euer though neuer
yours,
Geouanni Lutesio.

Hauing finished his letter thus amorously, he remembred himselfe, and although philippo stayde for him in the garden, yet he stept once againe to his standishe and wrote vnder this following sonnet:

Natura Nihil frustra.

On women Nature did bestow two eies
Like Hemians bright lamps in matchles beuty shining,
Whose beames do soonest captiuate the wise
And wary heads made rare by Arts refining.
But why did Nature in hir choise combining
Plant two fayre eyes within a beautuous face?
That they might fauour two with equall grace.

Venus did sooth vp Vulcan with one eie
With thother granted Mars his wished glee,
If she dyd so whom Heimens did defie
Thinke loue no sinne but grant an eie to me,
In vayne else Nature gaue two stars to thee:
If then two eyes may well two friends maintayne,
Allow of two, and proue not Nature vayne.

Natura repugnare
belluinum.

After he had ended this Sonnet he went and shewed them to Signyor Philippo, who liked well of his passionate humour, and desired nothinge more then to heare what answere his wife woulde make to these amarous poems: therefore that he might grant Lutesio the fitter opportunitie to deliuer them, he tooke a skiffe and wente with sundrye other Gentlemen his familiars to sollace him-

himselfe vpon the waters. In the meane while Lutesio who was left alone by himselfe, began to enter into the least disposition of a gelous man that woulde hazard the honour of his wife to content his owne suspitious humour: and whet on a friend to a fayned fancie which in time might grow to an vnfayned affection: so that smyling to himselfe he began thus to murmure in his minde. Is not he worthy to finde that seekes: and deserueth he not many blowes that craues to be beaten? Sith Philippo will buy the Buckes head, is he not worthy to haue the hornes: and seeing he will needes haue me court his wife in iest, were it not well if he might haue the Cuckow in earnest. Knowes he not that frumps amongest friends grow at last to open anger: that pretty sportings in loue, end oftentimes in pretty bargaines: that it is il gesting with edge tooles: and of all cattell worst cauilling with fayre women: for beawty is a baite that will not be dallied with. But I loue him to well, and I honour the lady to much to motion suche a thought in earnest: Though he be foolishe, I knowe hir to honeste to grant loue to the greatest Monarch of the world. While thus he was musing with himselfe, Philomela came into the Garden with two of her waiting women, whoe seeing Lutesio in a dumpe, thought hee was deuising of his new loue: wherevpon she stept to him, and began to aske him if hee proceeded in his purpose: I madame quoth he, if I meane to perseuer in life, and with that the water stood in his eyes, whether it was that he had an onion in his napkin to make him weepe, or that hee had suckt that speciall qualitie from his mother to let fal teares when he list I know not: but she perceiuing hee watred his plants, began somewhat to pytty his passyons, and asked him if yet hee had made the motion: No Madam quoth Lutesio, but here I haue written hir my mind, and please it you you shall be my secretary, both to read my letter and see hir name, for I knowe you wil

conceale it, Philomela desirous to sée what Ladie it was Lutesio was in loue withall, as Natura Mulierum Nouitatis auida, tooke it verye kindly at Lutesios handes that he would participat his secrets vnto hir, and promised not only to be silent, but to yéld hir opinion of the hope of his succesle, so she tooke the letter and promised the next morning to giue it him again, and so they fell into other chat talking of sundrie matters, as their present occasions did minister, till at last Philomela with childe to sée the contents of the Letter, tooke her leaue and went into hir Closet, where vnripping the seales, shée found lines far vnfitting to hir expectation. As soone as she saw Lutesios loue was meant to hir, she rent the paper in a thousand péeces, and exclaymed against him in most bitter tearmes, vowing hir Lord should be reuenged vpon him for this intended villanie, or else he should refuse hir for his wife, thus alone while she breathed out most hard inuectiues against him, yet at last that shée might aggrauate hir husbands displeasure the more against him, shée gathered vp the péeces, and laieng them together read them ouer, where perceiuing his passions, and thinking them to growe from a minde ful of fancie, hauing somewhat cooled her choler, shee resolued not to tell hir husband, least if hée should kill Lutesio she might be thought the occasion of the murther, and so bring hir vnblemisht honour in question, and therefore shée take paper and inke, and wrote him this sharpe replie.

Philomela to the most false Lutesio wisheth what he wants himselfe.

IF thou wonderest what I wish thée Lutesio, enter into thine owne want and thou shalt find. I desire thou mightest haue more honour and lesse dishonestie, else a short life and a long repentance

penſan ce, I ſée now that Hemblocke whereſoeuer it bée planted wil be peſtilent, that the ſerpent with the bright-eſt ſcales ſhroudeth the moſt fatall venome, that the rubie whatſoeuer foyle it hath will ſhewe red, that when nature hatcheth vicious, nurture will neuer make vertuous.

Thou art like Luteſio, vnto the Hyſope growing in America, that is liked of ſtraungers for the ſmell, and hated of the Inhabitantes for the operation, béeing as preiudiciall in the one, as delightſome in the other: ſo thou in voyce art holden honeſt, and therefore liked, but being once looked into and found laſciuious, thou wilte growe into as great contempte with thy familiars, as now thou art honoured amongſt ſtraungers. Hadeſt thou none anſwerable to thine appetite but Philomela? nor none to wrong but Philippo? canſt thou wiſhe mée ſo much harme, or owe him ſo little Friendſhip, I honouring thee ſo kindlie, and hée louing thée ſo déerelye, howe canſt thou loue the wife, that betraieſt the husband, or howe ſhall I déeme thou wilt prooue conſtant in loue, that art falſe in thy fayth, and to ſuche a friende who nexte my ſelfe counteth thée ſecond in his ſecretes. Vale man that harbours ſo bad a thoughte, ranſacke thy thoughts and rippe vp the ende of thy attempte and then if that ſhame hath not vtterlye abandoned thee, thou wilte for feare of ſhame leaue off thy luſt, and growe into more grace.

Tell me Luteſio, and if thou ſpeakeſt not what thou knoweſt, I defie thée, wherein haſt thou ſéene me ſo light, or haue my geſtures bene ſo lewde, that thou ſhouldeſt gather hope to gayne thy loue, hath Venice ſuſpected mée for a wanton, hath Italie déemed mée diſſolute, haue I graunted vnto thée or to any other extraordinarie fauours? haue I béene frowarde to my Lorde, or by any wanton trickes ſhewed the wracke of my chaſtitie? if anye of theſe blemiſhes haue diſgraced mée, ſpeake

it

it, and I will call for grace and amend them but neuer a whit the more befriend them: for whereas I honorably thought of Lutesio, vnlesse I finde thine humor changed I will aime at thy dishonour, and proclaime thee an enimie to Ladies cause thou art a friend to lust. Ah Lutesio, I would soner haue deemed the seas shoulde haue become drye, the earth barren, and the sunne without light, then thou wouldst haue sought to violate the honesty of philomela, or blemishe the honour of philippo: phillippos wealth is at thy will, his sword at thy commande, his hart plast in thy bosome, he reserueth of all that he hath for thée, saue only me to himselfe: and canst thou be so vnkinde to rob him of his only loue that owes thee so much loue, I iudge the best & I hope ỳ I imagin truth thou dooest it but to trye me: if it be so I brooke it with the more patience, yet discontent thou shouldest trouble mine eies with a wanton line: but if thy passionate humour be in earnest, it contents me not to denye thee but to defie thee, I proclaime my selfe enemy to thy life, as thou art enuious of mine and my husbandes honor. I will incense philippo to reuenge with his sword what I cannot requite with wordes, and neuer liue in quiet till I sée thée die infamous traytor as thou art, vnlesse thy grace be such to cease from thy treachery, come no more in my husbandes house, least thou looke for a dagger in thy bosome: fæde not at my table, least thou quaffe with Alexander thy fatall draught, to bee breefe: loue not phylomela if thou meane to liue, but looke vp to Heauen, become penitent for thy fond and foolish passions: let me see repentance in thine eyes, and remorse in thyne actions: bee as thou hast béene a friend to phylippo, and a fauourer of myne honour, and though thou hast deserued but meanely yet thou shalt bee welcome heartyly, and whatsoeuer is past, vpon thy penitence I will pardon, and for this time conceale it from the knowledge of the Conty, otherwise set downe thy rest we wil

not

not both liue together in Italie. Farewell.

Neuer thine, though she were
not Philippoes,
Philomela Media.

Hauing ended her letter, she resolued to answere his sonnet as well to shew her wit, as to choake his wantonnesse, and therefore she writ this poeme.

Quot Corda tot Amores.

Nature foreseeing how men would deuise,
More wiles than Protheus, women to entise:
Graunted them two and those bright shining eyes,
To pearce into mans faultes if they were wise.
For they with shew of vertue maske their vice,
Therefore to womens eyes belonges these giftes,
The one must loue, the other see mens shiftes.

Both these awayt vpon one simple heart,
And what they choose it hides vp without change,
The Emerauld will not with his portraite part,
Nor will a womans thoughtes delight to range.
They hold it bad to haue so base exchange.
One heart, one friend, though that two eies do chose him
No more but one, and heart will neuer loose him.

Cor vnum Amor vnus.

Assoone as she had sealed vp her letter she brookt no delay, but sent it straight by one of her waiting women to Lutesio, whom she found sitting alone in his chamber reading vpon a booke: Interrupting his studie, she deliuered him the letter, and the message of her Ladie. Lutesio kinde, gaue the gentlewoman a kisse: for he thought she valued a lip fauour more then a peece of gold, and with great courtesie gaue hir

leaue

leaue to depart: she was scarse out of the chamber but he opened the letter, and found what he expected, the resolution of a chast Countesse, too worthie of so ielous a husband, praysing in him selfe the honourable mind of Philomela: he went abroad to finde out Philippo, whome at last he met nére vnto ỹ Arsonals walking together to Lutesios house, there he shewed Philippo his wifes letter, and did comment vpon euery line, commending greatly her chastitie, and déeplie condemning his suspition: Tush saies Philippo all this winde shakes no corne, Hellena wit as sharply to Paris, yet she ran away with him. Try her once againe Lutesio, and for my life thou shalt finde calmer wordes, and sweeter lines: Lutesio with his eyes full of choller made him this answere. Philippo if thou béest so sottish with Cephalus to betray thy wiues honour perhaps with him, proue the first that repent, thy trecherie: When the wild boare is not chafed, thou mayst chasten him with a wand, but being once endamaged with the dogges he is dismall. Women that are chast while they are trusted, proue wantons being suspected causelesse: Iealousie is a spurre to reuenge. Beware Philomela heare not of this practise least she make thée eate with the blinde man manie a flie: Canst thou not Philippo content thy self that thy Lady is honest, but thou must plot the meanes to make her a harlot? If thou likest hunters fees so well, seeke another wood man, for I will not play an apple-squire to feede thy humours. If Venice knew as much as I am priuie to, they would hold thée worthie of that thou hast not, and her a fole if she gaue thee not what thou séekest for: I am sorie I haue wronged her vertues by so bad a motion: but henceforth Philippo hope neuer to get mee in the like vaine: and more if thou leauest not from being so vain, I will abandon thy companie, and renounce thy friendship for euer. Philippo hearing his friend Lutesio so short, desired him to be content, patient and silent, and he would race out the suspitious conceipt that haunted him, and for euer after grace his good wife with more loue and honour: and with

that

that Philippo and hee walked to the Rialto: but Lutesio would not for that night go to the house of Philippo, least his presence might be offensiue to Philomela, and so driue hym into some dumpish choller. Philippo comming home was welcome to his Ladie, and being somewhat late, they sate downe louingly to supper. The first course was no sooner come in, but Phillippo said hee maruelled that all that day he had not seene Lutesio, this he spake with his eies on Philomelas face, to see what countenance she would hold at hys name, shee little suspecting her husband had beene priuie to her new found louer, blusht and kept her selfe silent. Philippo toke no knowledge of any thing but past it ouer smoothly, and vsed his former woonted familiaritie to hys wife. The next day going abroad, Lutesio came to his house and went not in as his custome was boldly, but walking in the hall asked one of the Earls Gentlemen if the Countesse were stirring: he marueiling at Lutesios strangenesse, smiled and said, sir what needes this question? my Ladie is alone at her booke, go vp sir and helpe her in her Muses. I pray you quoth Lutesio go to the Countesse, and tell her I am heere, and would if her leisure serued her gladly haue a word with her: the Gentleman though hee wondered at these vncouth wordes of Lutesio, yet hee went vp and tolde his Ladie the message, who presently leauing her booke and companie, all to auoyd out of the chamber, sent for him vp: who no sooner came into her presence, but she saluted hym with such a frowne, that he stood as mortified as if hee had beene strocken with the eye of a Baselisk. Philomela seeing him in this passionate agonie, began with him thus.

I cannot tell Lutesio, howe to salute thee eyther with lookes or speeches, seeing thou art not as thou seemedst once my welwisher and my husbandes friend. The Lapidaries value the stones no longer than they hold their vertues: nor I prise a Gentleman no longer than he regardes his honor. For as a Diamont with a clowd is cast into the Goldsmithes vnk: so a Gentleman without credits, is carelesly

holden for refuse. I red thy letter, and I aunſwered it: but tell me, how ſhall I take it? as thou replieſt ſo will I entertaine: if to trie me, thou ſhalt finde the more fauour: If to betray me, hope for nothing but reuenge: Luteſio hearing Philomela ſo honourably peremptorie, with bluſhing cheeks made him this anſwere.

Madam as my face bewrayes my folly, and my ruddie hue my rechleſſe ſhowe, ſo let my wordes be holden for witneſſes of my trueth, and thinke whatſoeuer I ſay is ſoth, by the faith of a Gentleman then aſſure your ſelfe mine eye hath euer loued you, but neuer vnlawfully: and what humble dutie I haue ſhowne you, hath béene to honour you, not to diſhoneſt you. This letter was but to make triall howe you liked Philippo, to whome I owe ſuch faith that it would greeue me he ſhould haue a wife falſe: I knowe not Madam what humour drewe mee on to it. I am ſure neither your wanton lookes nor light demeanours, but a kinde of paſſion deſtined to breed mine owne preiudice, if your fauour exceede not my deſertes: If therefore your Ladiſhip ſhall forget and forgiue this folly, and conceale it from the Earle, who perhaps may take it meant in earneſt, enioyne me any penance Madam, and I will performe it with patience. Philomela hearing Luteſio thus penitent, began to cleere vp hir countenance, and ſaid to him thus: it is folly to rub the ſkarre when the wound is almoſt whole, or to renewe quarrelles when the matter is put in compriminiſe: therefore omitting all Luteſio I pardon thee, and promiſe neither to remember thy folly my ſelfe, nor yet to reueale it to my huſband, but thou ſhalt be euery way as hartely welcome to me as thou wert woont: onely this ſhall be thy penance, to ſweare vppon this bible neuer héereafter to motion me of anie diſhoneſtie. To this Letuſio willingly granted and tooke his oath: ſo were they reconciled, and the Counteſſe called for a cup of wine, and drunke to him: and after to paſſe away the after-noone they fell to cheſſe: after a mate or two, the Counteſſe was called aſide,

by

by one Margareta Stromia a Venetiã Lady, that came to visit her, and Lutecio went down to walke in the garden by chaunce, as he was striking through the Parlour, hee met the Duke whome he tooke by the arme: and led him into one of the priuie walks, & there recounted vnto him what reconcilement was growen betweene him and the Countesse his wife, which highly pleased the duke, so that without any more crosse humors they past a long time in all contented pleasures. Til Fortune whose enuye is to subuert content, and whose delight is to turne comicke mirth, into tragick sorrowes: enter into the Theater of Philomelas lyfe, and beganne to act a balefull scene in this manner.

Philippo, who had not quite extinguished suspition, but couerd vp in the scindars of melancholy, the glowing sparks of Iealousie beganne a fresh to kindle the flame, & to conceit a newe insight into his wiues actions, & whereas generally he mistrusted her before, and onely thought her a wanton as she was a woman. Nowe he suspected that there was too much familiaritie betweene her & Lutecio, and flatly that betweene them both he wore the hornes; yet accuse her he durst not, because her parentage was great, her frends many, and her honestye most of all. Neither had he anye probable articles to obiect against her, and therfore was silent, but euer murmuring with himselfe to this effect.

Philippo thou wert too fond, to plot Lutesio a meanes of his loue, graunting him opportunitye to woe, which is the swetest frend to loue, men can not dally with fire, nor sport with affection: for he that is a suter in Ieast, maye be a spéder in earnest: haue not suche a thought in thy minde Philippo, for as Lutesio is thy frend, so is he faithfull: and as Philomela is thy wife, so she is honest: and yet both may ioyne issue and proue dissemblons, louers haue Argus eyes to be warye in their doings, and Angels tongues, to talke of holynes, when their hartes are most

lascivious: though my wife returned a taunting letter to him openly, yet she might send him swæte lines secretlye, her satiable answere, was but a cloak for the rayne: for euer since they haue bene more familiare and lesse asunder, nor she is neuer merrye if Lutesio beginne not the mirth, if Lutesio be not at table, her stomacke is queasy, as when the Halcirines hatch, the sea is calme, and the Phenix neuer spreads her winges, but when the sun beames shines on her nest. So Philomela is neuer frolicke but when she is matcht in the companye of Lutesio, this curtesie growes of some priuate kindnes, which if I can finde out by iust proofe and circumstance, let me alone to reuenge to the vttermost.

In this iellouse passion, he passed away manye dayes and many moneths, till one day Lutesio beeing alone in the chamber whith Philomela, the Erale comming in and hearing they were together, went charily vp the staires, & peeping in at the locke hole, saw them two standing at a bay windowe, hand in hand, talking verye familiarlye: which sight stroke suche a suspitious furye into his head, that he was halfe frantick, yet did he smother what hee thought in silence, and going downe into the garden, left the two still togeather: being there alone by him selfe, he cast a thousand suspitious doubtes in his head, of Lutesio and his wyues dishonesty, intending to watch more narrowly to take them in a trap, while they poore soules litle mistrusted his iellousie.

He had not stayed in the garden long, ere Lutesio and the Countesse went downe togeather to walke, where they found the Earle in his dumps, but they two wakned him from his drowsy melancholy, with the pleasaunt devices of Signior Lutesio. Philippo making at all no shew of his suspition, but entertained his freend with all accustomed familiarity, so that they past awaye that days with all contented pleasures, till night the infortunate leader of Philomelas misfortunes grew on: when she and

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the Earle went to bed together, for as she laye talking, she started, being new quickned with childe, & fæling the vnperfect infant stirre. Philippo asking the cause, she ready to wæpe for Joy, said: good newes my Lorde, you shall haue a yonng sonne: at this his hart wared coulde, and he questioned her if shee were with childe, shee taking his hand laying it on her side, said: fæle my Lord, you maye perceiue it moone, with that it leapt against his hande. When she creæping into his bosome, began amorously to kisse him and commend him: that though for the space of fower yeeres that they had bæne married she had had no childe, yet at last bee had plaied the mans parte, and gotten her a boy. This toucht Philippo at the quicke, and doubled the flame of his Jelousie, that as a man halfe lunaticke he lept out of the bed, and drawing his rapier, began thus to mannace poore Philomela. Incestuous strũpet, more wanton then Lamia, more lasciuious thẽ Laius, and more shameless then Pasophane, whose lyfe as it hath bæne shadowed with painted holynes, so it hath bæn full of pestilent villanies, thou haste suckt subtiltie from thy mother, thou hast learned with Circes to inchãt, with Calipso to charm, with the Sirens to sing, and al these to to brædе my destruction: yet at last thy concealed vices are burst open into manifest abuses. Now is thy lust growen to light, thy whordomes to be acted in the Theaters of Venice, thy palpable dissolutions to be proclaimd in the prouinces of Italye, time is the mother of trueth, and nowe hath laide open thy life to the worlde: thou art with Venus taken in a net by Vulcan, and though thou hast long gone to the water, yet at last thou art come broken home. I mistrusted this of long, and haue founde it out at last, I mean the loues betwæne thæ and that traitour Lutesio, which although I smothered with silence, yet I bid vppe for reuenge: I haue sæne with græfe, and past ouer with sorrow manye odd pranckes, thinking still time wold haue altered thy thoughts, but now thou hast

ſpoyled thy belly full, and gotten a baſtard, & wouldſt fop me off to be ỹ father, no though I be blind I wil not ſwallow ſuch a Flie. For the time of thy quickning, & his freſh acquaintance iumps in an euen date, this fowre yeare I haue beene thy husband, and could not raiſe vppe thy belly, and Luteſio no ſoner grew familiar with thee, but hee got thee with childe, and were it not baſe trumpet, that I reſerue thee to further infamy, I would preſently butcher thee and the brat, both with one ſtab, and with that he flounge out of the chamber, leauing poore Philomela in a great maze, to heare this vnlookt for diſcourſe: in ſo much that after ſhe had lyen a while in a traunce, comming to her ſelfe, ſhe burſt forth into aboundaunce of teares, and paſſed away the night in bitter complaints, whileſt Philippo mad with the frantick humour of Ielouſie, ſate in his ſtudy hamring how he might bring both Luteſio, and her to confuſion, one while he reſolued to prouide Gallies ready for his paſſage, & thē to murther both his wife & Luteſio, and ſo to flee away into ſome forraine countrey, then he determined to accuſe them before the Duke his neere kinſman, and haue them openly puniſhed with the extremitie of the law, but he wanted witneſſes to confirme his Ieloufe allegations: being thus in a quandary, at laſt he called vp two genowaies his ſeruants, ſlaues that neyther regarded God, religion, nor conſcience, and them hee ſuborned with ſweet perſwaſions and large promiſes, to ſweare that he and they did take Luteſio and Philomela, in an adulterous action, although the baſe villaines, had at all no ſparkes of honeſty in their mindes, yet the honor of their lady, her courteſie, to al her knowen vertues, and ſpeciall good qualities did ſo preuaile, that they were paſſing vnwilling to blemiſhe her good name with their periuries, yet at laſt the County cloyde thē ſo with the hope of golde, that they gaue free conſent to confirme by oath, what ſo euer he ſhould plot down to them. Whereupon the next morning the Earle gat him early to the Duke of

Venice

Venice who was his cousin germaine, and made solemne complaint of the dishonor offered him by his wife and signior Lutesio: craving iustice, that he might haue suche a manifest iniurie redressed with the rigour of the Lawe. The Duke whose name was Loremso Medici, græued that his kinsman was vexed with such a crosse, and sorrowed that Philomela, that was so famous in Italye for her beutye and vertue, should dishonour her selfe and her husband by yelding her loue to lasciuious Lutesio, swearing a present dispatch of reuenge, and thereupon graunted out warrantes to bring them both presentlye before him.

Philippo glad of this, went his waye to the house of Lutesio, wel armd, and euery way appointed, as if he had gone to sacke the strongest houlde in all Italye, carrying with him a crue of his frænds & familiars, furnished at al points to apprehend the guiltles gentleman: assoone as they came to his house, they found one of his seruants sitting at the doze: Who sæing the Earle, saluted him reuerētly, & merueiled what the reason should be, hee was accompated with such a multitude. Philippo demaunded of him where his master was, walking may it please your honour, (quoth he) in his garden. Then sayes the earle if he be no moze busie, I will be so bould as to goe speake with him, and therefoze followe me saith hee to the crue, who preasing in after the Earle, encountered Lutesio, cōming from his gardine to go into his chamber, assone as he spied Philippo, with a merrye loke, as if his harte had commanded his eyes, to bid him welcome, he saluted the Earle most gratiously, but highlye was astonished, to sæ such a troope at his heeles.

Philippo (contrarie as Lutesio offered to imbrace him with his best hand) toke him fast by the bosome, and pulling forth his poineard, said: Traitour, were it not I regard mine honor, and were loath to be blemisht with the blood of so base a companion, I would rip out that false

hart that hath violated the faith once united betwirt vs, but the extremitie of the lawe shall reuenge thy villanie: and therefore Officers, take him into your custodie, and carie him presentlie to the Duke, whether I will bring straight the strumpet his Paramour, that they maye receiue condigne punishment for their hainous and detestable treacherie.

Poore Lutesio, who little lookt for such a grāting of the Earle, wondred whence this bitter spæch should growe, so deeply amazed, that he stood as a man in a trance, til at last gathering his wits together, hee began humblie and fearefullie to haue replied, when the Earle commaunded the officers to carrie him awaie, and would not heare him vtter anie word. Ye sparing him home to his own house to fetch his sorrowful and faultles wife to heare the balefull verdict of hir appeached innocency: comming vp into her bed chamber, hee found her sitting by her bed side, on her knees in most hartie and deuout praier, that it would please God to clær her husband from his iealosie, and protect her from anie open reproach or slaunder, vttering her Orisons with such heart breaking sighs, and aboundance of teares, that the base catchpoles that came in with him tooke pittie, and did compassionate the extremitie of her passions: But Philippo, as if he had participated his nature with the bloudthirstie Caniball, or eaten of the seathin rot, that maketh a man to be as cruell in heart as it is hard in the rynde, stept to her & casting her backward, bad her arise strumpet, and hastely make her ready, for the Duke staied for her comming, and had sent his officers to fetch her.

Perplexed Philomela, casting vp her eie, and sæing such a crue of rake-hels, ready to attend vpon him, was so surchardged with grefe, that she fell downe in a passion: Philippo let her lie, but the Ministers stept vnto her and receiued her againe assone as shee was come to her selfe, she desired Philippo, that for all the loue of their youth he

would

would grant her but onely this one fauour, that she might not be carried before the Duke with that common attendance, but that she and he might goe together without anie further open discredit, and then if she could not proue her selfe innocent, let her without fauour abide the penaltie of the Lawe: although shee craued this bone with abundance of teares, yet Philippo would haue no remorse but compelled her to attire herselfe, and then conuayed her with this crue to the Dukes palace, where there was gathered together all the Consigladiors and chiefe Magistrates of the Cittie, her passing through the stretes, draue a great wonder to the Venetians, what the cause of hir trouble should be: so that infinite number of Citizens followed her, and as manie as could, thrust into the common Hall to heare what should bee obiected against Philomela.

At last, when the Judges were set, and Lutesio and Philomela brought to the barre: the Duke commaunded Philipo to discourse what articles he had to obiect against his wife and Lutesio. Phillippo with his eies full of Iealousie, and heart armed with reuenge, loking on them both, fetching a deepe sigh, began thus. It is not vnknowen to the Venetians (right famous Duke and honorable Magistrates of this so worthie a Cittie) how euer since I married this Philomela, I haue yelded her such loue with reuerence, such affection with care, such deuoted fauours with affected duties, ý I did rather honour her as a saint, then regarde her as a wife: so that the Venetians counted mee rather to dote on her extreamly, then to loue her ordinarilie. neither can I denie mightie Lorenzo, but Philomela returned all these my fauours with gentle loues, and obedient amours, beeing as duetifull a wife as I was a louing husband, vntill this Traitour Lutesio, this ingratefull monster, that liuing hath drunke of the riuer Lethe, which maketh men forgetfull of what is past: so he, oblitious of all honour I did him, was the first actor

in

in this tragick ouerthrow of the fame of the house of Philippo. I apeale to the Venetians, euē from the magistrat to the meanest man, what honorable partes of frendship, I haue shewen to Lutesio, howe he was my second selfe, except Philomela, his bosome was the Cell, wherin I hid vp my secrets, his mouth was the Oracle whereby I derected my actions, as I could not be without his presence, soe I neuer would do anye thing without his counsaile: cōmitting thus my selfe, my soule, my goods, mine honor, nay my wife, to his honour, only reseruing her from him: of all ẏ I haue priuate to my selfe, the traitour (oh listen to a tale of rueth Venetians) neither regarding God, nor respecting his freend, neither moued with feare nor toucher with faith, forgetting all frendship, became amorouslye to woe my wife, and at last dishonestly wan her: and now of long time lasciuiously hath bed her, which I suspected as litle as I trusted, and affected them both dearely. How long they haue continued in their adulterous loues I know not: but as time hatcheth trueth, and reuealeth the very entralles of hidden secrets, so yesterday oh the balefull day of my dishonour: Lutelio and my wife being suspected of too much familiarity by my seruantes. though neuer mistrusted by mee: were watched by these Genowaies, who seing them in the chamber together, shameles as they were, having little regard of any priuy priers into their actions, fell to these amorous sportes, so openly that through a chincke of the dore these were eye witnesses of there adulterye. I being then in the garden, comming vp and finding these two peping in at the dore, stole secretly vp, and with these poore slaues, was a beholder of mine owne dishonour: My shame was so great, and my sorrow so extreame: to see my wife so inconstant, and my frend so false, that I stepped back againe into the garden, calling away these varletes: and leauing them still agents of these vnkind villanies: when I came into the garden, such was the loue to Philomela, and so

great:

great the friendship I boare to Lutesio, that trust me Venetians, had my selfe only bene a witnes of their follies, I would haue smothered the fault w̄ silence. But knowing that such base rascales would at one time or other be blabbes, and so blemish mine honor, and so accuse me for a wittolde to my owne wife, I resolued to haue them punished by law, that hath so peruersly requited my loue: therfore haue I here produced thē in opē court, that my dishonors may end in their reuenge, calling for iustice with extremity, against two persons of such trecherous ingratitude. And hær Philippo ceased driuing al the hearers into a great mase, that the Duke sate astonished, the Consigladiori musing, and the common people murmuring at the discourse of Signior Philippo, and bending their enuious eyes against the two innocents, for wronging so honorable a County. To be bræfe, Lutesio and Philomela were examined, & no doubt, they tould sundry tales to clære themselues, but in vaine, for the oath of the two slaues found them guiltie, whreupon a quest of choice Citizens went vpon thē, and boath as guilty condemned to death. When the fatall sentence should haue bene pronounced against them, Philippo with a counterfait countenance full of sorrowe, knæling down, desired that they might not die, because it would græue him to be blemisht with the blode of his wife whome he had loued, or of his frend whome he had honored: at whose humble intreatye Iudgement was giuen that Philippo & Philomela should be deuorced: and he at frē liberty to marry whom he list, and Lutesio for euer to be banished, not only out of Venice but of al the Dukedome and territories of the same. Assoone as sentence was giuē, Lutesio fetcht a great sigh, and laying his hand on his bosome said: This breast Philippo, did neuer harbour any disloyal thoght against thær, nor once Imagine or contriue anye dishonour against thy wife. Whatsoeuer thou hast wrongfye auerred, or the Duke hardlye conceiued: for witnesse I appeale to none

but God, who knoweth me guiltlesse, and to thine owne conscience: whose woꝛme foꝛ this wꝛonge, will euer bee restlesse. My banishment I bꝛoke with patience, in that I know time will discouer any truth in my absence: smoak cannot be hidden, noꝛ the wꝛong of Innocents scape without reuenge. I onely græue foꝛ Philomela, whose chastety is no lesse then her vertues are many, & her honours as farre from lust, as thou and thy periured slaues from trueth: it boles not vse many woꝛds, only this I will say, men of Venice hath lost a frænd which he will misse, and a wife that hee will soꝛrow foꝛ. And so he went out of the counsell house, home to his owne lodging, hauing the tearme of twentie one daies appointed foꝛ his departure. Philomela poꝛe soule, knowing what was in recoꝛde, could not be reuerst: that her credit was crackt, her honoꝛ vtterly blemisht, and her name bꝛought in contempt: foꝛ all this abashed not outwardly, what soeuer she conceited inwardlyo, but seemed in her farre moꝛe full of fauour and beautye then euer she was befoꝛe: and her lookes so modest and graue, that Chastetye sæmed to sit in her eyes, and to pꝛoclaime the wꝛong was offered vnto her by these periurde persones. With this assured and constant countenaunce, first looking on the Duke, on the Consiliadoꝛi, on the common people, and then on her husband, she vsed these woꝛds.

O Philippo Medici, once the louer of Philomela thogh now the wꝛacke of her honours, and the blemish of her highe foꝛtunes. Howe canst thou looke to heauen and not tremble? howe canst thou behould me, and not blush: how canst thou thinke there is a God without fear, oꝛ a hell without hoꝛrour? canst thou blinde the deuine Maiestesty: as thou hast led these Magistrats into a false opinion of thine owne dishonour, and my dishonesty *Mille testes conscientia*, if these slaues the ministers of thy iealous enuye should growe domme, and all the woꝛld silent, yet will thine owne conscience dayly crye out in thine eares,

that

that thou hast wrongd Philomela. I am the daughter of a Duke, as thou art the sonne of an Earle: my vertues in Venice, haue bẽn as great as thine honors: my fortunes and my frends, more then thine: al these will search into this cause, and if they finde out mine innocencie, thinke Philippo worthie of great pennaunce. But in vaine, I vse charmes to a deafe Adder, therfore Philippo, I leaue thee to the choice of a new loue, and the fortune of a faire wife, who if she proue as honestly amorous towards thee as Philomela, then wrong her not with suspition, as thou hast don me with iealousie: least she proue too liberall, and pay my debts.

Yet Philippo, hast thou lost more in losing Lutesio, then in forsaking me, for thou mayest haue manye honest wiues, but neuer so faithfull a frend: therefore though I be deuorced, be thou and he reconciled, least at last the horror of thy conscience, drawe thee into dispaire, and paine thee with too late repentance. So Philippo euer wishing thee well, I wil euer intreat that neither God maye laye the wrong of myne innocency to thy charge, nor my frēds triumphe in thy infortunate reuenge, and so farewell.

With this shee stept foorthe of the Hall, leauing Philippo greatly tormented in his conscience, and the Duke and all the rest wondring at her patience, saying: it was pittie she was drawen on to wantonnesse by Lutesio.

The rumours of this spread through al Venice, of the lasciuious life of Philomela, some said all was not gould that glistered: that the fairest faces, haue oft times the falsest harts: & the smoothest looks, the most treacherous thoughts: that as the Agate bee it neuer so white without, yet it is full of black strokes within, & that the most shining sun, breedeth the most sharpe showres: so women the more chastety they professe openly, the les chary they are in secrete of their honesty: others said, it might bee a compacted matter, by the Earle to be rid of his wife:

some said, that the matter might be mistaken, and made worse then it was. Thus diuerslye they did descant, while poore Philomela beeing gotten to a gentlemans house, a frend of hers, sate sorrowfullye resoluing how she might best salue this blemish: one while she thought to go home to the Duke her father, and incense him to reuenge, that againe she misliked, for by open Iarres, and ciuile discention, were she neuer so innocent, yet her name should by such open brawles, grow more infamous: an other while she thought to perswade Lutecio against him, and that he might procure the slaues by torture to bewraye the subornation of periurie, and so bring her husband within the compas of open trecherye.

Thus the secrete loue she bare still to Philippo would not suffice, for she had rather beare guiltlesse shame then bring her husband to perpetuall infamie. Thus did shee plot in her minde sundrie wayes of reuenge: but at last this was her resolution, sith her honor so famous through Italy, was now so highly staind: she would neither staye in Italye, nor yet returne to her father: but go into some straunge countrie, and there die vnknown, that being absent from the rumour of her bad reporte, she might liue, though poorely, yet quyet: vpon this determination she set downe her rest, and gathered all her cloathes & Iewels togeather: for the Earle sent her all whatsoeuer shee had of hers, and she returned him by the messenger a ring with a Diamond, whererein was written these words, *Olim meminisse dolebit*. The Earle toke it, and put it on his finger, which after bred his further miserie.

But leauing him a contented man, though with a troubled conscience: for the satisfying of his iellous reuenge: Againe to Philomela, who hauing packt vp al her iewels and treasures: listned for a shippe, and heard of one that made to Palermo in Sicilia. As the poore Countesse was careles of her selfe, as a woman halfe in dispair, so she little regarded to what port of Christẽdom the bark made,

and

and therefore hired passage in ỳ ship so secretly, that none but her own selfe and a page did know, when or whether shee ment to make her voyage: so that on a sodaine, hauing certaine intelligence at what houre the ship would warpe out of the Hauen, she slipt awaie, and her Page with her, and getting aboorde vnder saile, commit her selfe to God, the mercie of the Seas, and to the husband of manie hard fortunes. The Shippe had not gone a Leage vpon the Seas, but Philomela began to be sicke: whereupon the Maister of the Shippe comming in to comforte her, found her in his eie one of the fairest creatures that euer he saw, and though her colour were somthing pale through her present sickues, yet he could compare it to no worse shewe then the glister of the Moone in a silent night and a clære skie, so that the poore Shippers conscience began to bee prickt, and loue beganne to shake him by the slæue, that he sat downe by her, and after his blunt fashion, gaue her such swæt comfort as such a swaine could afford: Philomela thanked him and tould him it was nothing but a passion that the roughnesse of the Seas had wrought in her, who heretofore was vnacquainted with any other waters then the riuer Po, and such small crækes as watered Italie. Hereupon the Maister departed, but with a Flea in his eare, and loue in his eie: for he had almost forgot his Compasse, he was so farre out of compasse with thinking howe to compasse Philomela: in this amorous humour, hee began to visite often, the Cabin wherein Philomela laie, which was a meanes rather to encrease his furie, then to qualifie the fire of loue that began to heat him: For as hee that playeth with a Bee may soner fæle her sting then taste of her honie: so hee that acquainteth himselfe with loue, maie more easilie repent him then content him, and soner inthrall himselfe in a Labirinth, then get an houre of quiet libertie. So it fell out with Tebaldo, for so was the Maister of the ship called: for he by conuersing priuatelie

and familiarlie with Philomela, became so farre in loue, that he held no happinesse like the obtaining of this loue: he noted the excellencie of her beautie, the exquisitnes of her qualities, and measured euerie part with such precise iudgement, that the smal heat of desire, grew to a glowing fire of affection. But for all this, hee durst not reueale his mind vnto her, least happily by his motion, she should be moued vnto displeasure: But as by time, smal sparks grow into great flames: so at last he wared so passionate, that there was no way with him but death or dispair, if he didnot manifest his thoughts vnto her: resoluing thus damnably with himselfe, that howsoeuer loue or fortune dealt with him, he would haue his mind satisfied: for if she granted, then he would kéepe her in Palermo as his Paramor: if she denied, séeing he had her within the compas of his barke, he would haue his purpose by force, and so becom Lord of his content by conquest. Thus resolute he went towards the cabin of Philomela to bewray his affection vnto her, when drawing néere the doore, he heard her playing most cunningly vpon a lute, certaine lessons of curious descant, staying awhile, least he might interrupt so swéet musick: at last she left of, & fel from her lute to this lamentable complaint. Oh poore woman, woothy so tearmed, being brought to thy woe by a man, now dost thou sée, that as such as are stung by the Tarentula, are best cured by Musicke: so such minds as are vered by sorrow finde no better relefe then a swéete relish of comforting melodie. Ah Abstemia, for so she now called her name, the more to disguise herselfe, if musicke should bee answerable to thy martirdome, or the excellencie of descant comformable to the intent of the distressor: Then must Apollo bee fetcht from heauen, Orpheus from his graue, Amphiõ from his rest, the Syrens from their roks to qualifie thy musings with their musicks: For though they excell in degrées of sounds, thou excédest in diuersities of sorrowes, being far more miserable then musical:

and

and yet they, the rarest of all others: once Abstemia thou wert counted the fairest in Italy, and now thou art holden the falsest: thy vertues were thought many, now thy dishonors are counted nomberles: thou wert the glory of thy parents, the hope of thy friends, the fame of thy country, the wonder of thy time of modestie, the peragon of Italy for honorable grace, & the patern wherby wome did measure their perfections: for shee that was holden lesse modest, was counted a wanton: and she that would sam more vertuous, was estæmed too precise: But now thou art valued worth lesse of all thy former honours, by the stain of one vndeserued blemish. Ah, had I bin false to my husband, perhaps I had bene more fortunate, though not in mine owne conscience, yet to the eies of the world lesse suspected, and so not detected: but innocency to God is the swætest incence, & a cõscience without guilt, is a sacrifice of the purest savor. What though I be blamed: if my life be lent me, my honor wil be recouered, for as God wil not suffer a murther to escape without punishment: so he wil not let the wrong of the innocent goe to his graue without reuenge? Though thou bee bannished Abstemia, yet comfort thy selfe, account each countrey thine owne, and euerye honest man thy neighbour: let thy life bee meane, so shalt thou not bee lookt into: for envye crẽpeth not so lowe as Cotages: rẽds bend with the wind, when Cedars fall with a blast: poore men relie lightly of fortune, because they are to weake for fortune, when higher states fæle her force, because they nosle in her bosome: acquaint not thy selfe with many, least thou fal into the hands of flaterers, for the popular sorts haue more eies, and longer tongues then the rich: sæme curteous to al, but conuerse with fewe: and let thy vertues bee much spoken though thy selfe liue neuer so priuate. Hold honesty more dær then thy life, & be thou neuer so poore, yet be chast & chose rather to starue in the strẽts, thẽ liue daintily at a lechers table: if as thou art beutiful Abstemia,

any

anie fall in loue with thy fauours, and what hee cannot winne by suites, will seeke to get by force, and so rauishe thee of thy richest glorie: chuse rather to bee without breath, then liue with such a blemish. Thou art fraudlesse in Sicilia, and though thou complainest, thou shalt not be heard: might ouercomes right, and the weakest are still thrust to the wall. Torment therefore constraint in loue in the greatest Prince: I haue prouided (quoth she) a poyson in the seale of my ring, as deadly as it is litle, resoluing as stoutly as Hanniball did, who held the like in the pomell of his sworde: and chuse rather to die free, then fall into the hands of Scipio. So, before any leacher shall force to satisfie his passion, I wil end my life with this fatal poison. So Abstenia shalt thou die more honorablie, which is more deere then to liue disgraced: enough is a feast, poore wench, what neds these solemne preachings? Leaue these secret dumps and fall to thy Lute, for thou shalt haue time enough to thinke of sorrow: and with that she tuned her strings, and in a merrie vaine plaid three or foure pleasaunt lessons, and at last sung to her selfe this conceited ditte.

An Ode.

WHat is loue once disgraced?
But a wanton thought ill placed,
Which do blemish whom it paineth,
And dishonors whome it daineth.
Se ene in higer powers most,
Though some fooles doe fondlie bost
That who so is high of kin,
Sanctifies his louers sin.
Ioue could not hide *Ios* scape,
Nor conceale *Calistos* rape.
Both did fault, and both were famed,
Light of loues whome lust had shamed.
Let not women trust to men,
They can flatter now and then.
And tell them manie wanton tales,
Which doe breed their after bales.
Sinne in kings is sinne we see,
And greater sene, cause greate of gree.
Maius peccatum, this I read,
If he be high that doth the deed.
Mars for all his Dietie.
Could not *Venus* dignifie.
But *Vulcan* trap her and her blame,
Was punisht with an open shame.
All the Gods laught them to scorne,
For dubbing *Vulcan* with the horne.
Whereon may a woman bost,
If her chastitie be lost.
Shame await'h vpon her face
Blushing checks and foule disgrace,
Report will blab, this is she
That with her lust winnes infamie.
If lusting loue be so disgrac't,
Die before you liue vnchast.
For better die with honest fa me,
Then lead a wanton life with shame.

Assone as Philomela had ended her dittie, she laid down her Lute, and fell to her booke: but Tebaldo having heard all her secret meditatiõ, was driuen in such a mase, with the conceipt of her incomparable excellencie, that he stode as much astonished to heare her chaste spæches, as Acteon to see Dianas naked beauties: entring with a percing insight into her vertues, & perceiuing shee was some greater personage then hee at the first tooke her for. his loue was so qualed with the rarenes of her qualities, that he rather indeuoured to honor her as a saint, then to loue her as a paramour: desire now began to chaunge to reuerence, and affection to an honest deuotion: that hee shamed he once thought any way lust towardes so vertuous a creature: thus Metamorphosed, he stept into her cabin, and found her reading, to whome he did shewe more then accustomed reuerence: which Philomela returned with equall curtesie. At last he tould her, how hee had heard her lamentable discourse of her misfortune and the honorable resolution of her honestye, which did so tye him to be denoted towards her, that if when shee came into Palermo, his pore house might serue her for a lodging, it and all therein, with him selfe and his wife, should bee at her commaund. Philomela thanked him hartely for his kinde and courteous proffer, and promised to her abilitie, not to be vngratefull.

Well, leauing her vnder saile towardes Palermo, to S. Ganami Lutesio, who harboring a hateful intent of reuenge in his minde against the County Philippo, thoght to pay him home pat in his lappe, and therefore making as spedy a dispatch as might be, of his affaires: hee takes his iourney frõ Venice towards the Duke of Millaines court, the father of Philomela, to whome he had recõted what had hapned to his daughter, what had chanced to him, and how great dishonour was offered to him by her husband. The Duke although these newes touched him at the quick, yet dissembled the matter, and be-

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ganne in great choller to vpbraid Lutesio, that no doubt the earle did it vpon iust cause, or els neither would hee haue wronged a wife whome so tenderly hee loued, neyther reiected a freend whome he so deerly honored, nor yet the duke & senate of Venice would haue yelded so peremptory & hard a sentence, as either banishment to him, or deuorce to her.

To this Lutesio made replye, that the Earle to proue his surmised articles true, had suborned two slaues, that were Genouaies to periure themselues. He shewed the Duke the letter that past betweene him and his daughter, and the reason why he wrote them: But al this could not satisfie the Dukes opinion, but he charged his gentlemen to lay hands on Lutesio, and to carye him to prison, vntill he had further triall of the matter, sweating if hee found him to haue played false with his daughter, neither should his banishment excuse him, nor her deuorce: for he would haue both their liues, for offering dishonour to the house of Millaine.

Vpon this censure of the Duke, Lutesio was caried to prison, and the Duke left mightelye perpelered: who began to cast in his minde manye doubtes of this straunge chance, vowing in his hart, a fatal reuenge vpon Philipo for blemishing his daughters honour with such open infamie. When thus the Duke was in a heauye suspition, one of the Genouaies, whose conscience tormented him, ran away from Venice, and came to Millaine: where cõming to the Dukes pallace, he desired to speake with his Grace, from the County Philippo, being brought straight vnto him: assone as he came into his presence, he kneeled downe, trembling, and besought him of mercy. The duke astonished at the straunge terror of the man, demaunded of him what he was, and from whence he came. The slaue tould him that he was borne at Genoua, and hadde beene seruaunt to that infortunate Earle, the Countye Philippo Medici, and one of those periured traitours that

had borne false witnes against his daughter Philomela. At this the Duke started out of his seat, and taking the fellow courteously vp, bade him not to feare nor doubte, for if he spake nothing but the trueth, he should not only be freely pardoned, but highly rewarded.

Vpon this the poore slaue discourst from point to point, First the singular chastitie of his lady and Mistresse, and then the deepe Iealousie of Philippo, who first as hee had learned, caused his deare frend Signior Greuani Lutesio, to trye her, who finding her wise, vertuous, and constant, fell out with the Earle, that he would wrong his wyfe with such causeles suspition: after he rehearsed how the County grew Iealouse, that Philomela fauored Lutesio, and because he had no proofe to confirme his mistrust, but his owne douting head, he suborned him, and a fellowe of his to sweare, that they saw Lutesio and the Countes euen in the very act of Adultery, which in them was periurie, and in him letcherye: for both the Gentleman, and their Ladye was innocent, and with that falling downe on his knées, and melting into teares, hee craued pardon of his lyfe.

The Duke whose eies were full of fire, as sparking reuenge and hate, bad him bee of good chéere, and pulling his purse out of his pocket, and gaue it him for an earnest penny of further freendship, and charged his Gentlemen to giue the Geneuaye good entertainment. And ẃ that sent for Signior Lutesio out of prison, & sorrowfull that he had wrongd him so much, tould him how one of the Genouais was come ỳ gaue false witnes against his daughter, & had reuealed all: which ioyed Lutecio at the very hart, so that humbly & with watrie cheeks, he desired the duke to reuenge his daughters wrongs, but as litle boted his intreatye, as spurres to a swift horse. For the Duke gathering a mightie armie, made as much spéed as might be towards Venice, intending to quit the wrong proffered to Philomela by suspitious Philippo, who then lined in

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all desired content, in ẏ his Jelious humor was satisfied: was determining where to make a new choise for fauor, when time chere this change of fortune, that newes was brought into Venice, that not onelye the Millaine Duke was come downe, to waste and spoile the citties belonging vnto the Signorie of Venice, but also ment to gather all the forces of his frendes in Christendome, to reuenge the abuse offered to his daughter Philomela.

This newes being come vnto the eares of Philypo, made him forget his woing, and begin to wonder how he should shift of the misfortune ready to light vpon him, if any thing were proued of his suborning treacherye: hee now beganne to enter into consideration with him selfe that if Lutesio wer gotten to Millaine, he would not only lay the plot of all mischiefe against him, but also discouer his treason, ẏ incense the Duke to reuenge, and vpon this he thought grew the occasion of his men in armes: then did he feare least the Genouaie that was run away from him, should com to the Dukes court, ẏ there confirme by autenticall prowfe, what Lutecio vpon his honor did affirme: thus diuerslye perplered, he remained in great dũps, while the Duke and Consiliadiorie of Venice gathering into their senate house, began to consult what reason the Millonians had to inuade their territories. And therfore to be fully satisfied in the cause, they sent Embassadours to inquire the reason why he rose in armes against thẽ: whether it were for the sentence offered against Philomela or no? and if it were, that he should herein rest satisfied. That as she was exiled by law, so she was iustly condemned for letcherie:

The Ambassadours hauing their charge, came to the Duke, lying then not farre of from Bergamo, and did their message vnto him, which he reanswered thus: that hee was not come as an enemy against them, but as a priuate foe to Philippo, and therefore required to approwne his daughters innocencie: not by armes, but by

witneſſes in the Senate houſe of Venice: and if ſhe were found guiltie, to haue condigne puniſhment enioynde and executed againſt Philippo: This if they did denie, he was come with his owne blade, and his Souldiers to plague the Venetians for the partiall iudgementes of their Magiſtrates: and if they ment to haue him come into Venice, he craued for his aſſurance ſufficient hoſtages. The Ambaſſadors returned with this aunſwere to the Duke and the Conſiliadórie, who held his requeſt paſſing reaſonable, and thought it would be diſhonor to them and their eſtate, if they ſhould ſtand in deniall of ſo equall a demaund: and therfore the Duke, not onely ſent him his onely Sonne, but ſixe young ſonnes more, al the Sonnes of men of honour for hoſtage. Upon whoſe arriual, the Duke of Millaine onely accompanied with Lutesio, the Genouaies, and ten other noble men went to the Cittie, and was magnificently intertained by the Duke and the Cittizens: where feaſting that day, the next morning they reſolued to méet in the Senate houſe, to hear what could be alleadged againſt Philippo, whom they cited peremptorilie to appeare, to aunſwere to ſuch obiections as ſhuld be laid againſt him. The guiltie Earl now began to feele remorſe of conſcience, and to doubt of the iſſue of his treacherie: and therefore getting into his cloſet, he called the Genouaie to him, and there began to perſwade him, that although both Signior Lutesio and his fellowe did bewray the ſuborнation of periurie, yet he ſhould denie it vnto the death, and for his reward he bad him take halfe his treaſure and his frédome. The Genouay made ſolemn protеſtation that he would performe no leſſe then he commanded him: and therevpon as an aſſamſit, toke the ſignet of the Earle, for performance of all conenants. Thus armed as hethought, in that he reſted ſafly in the ſecrecy of his ſlaue: the next day he appeared in the Senate houſe, whether the Dukes of Millaine and of Venice came with all the Conſiliadorie

and

and chiefe Citizens of the town, to heare how this matter should be debated. At last the Duke of Milaine arose amongst them al and began thus to discourse: I come not Venetians to enlarge my territories with the swoorde, though I haue burdened your boorders with the waight of armed men: I rise not in armes to seeke martiall honours, but ciuill iustice: not to claime other mens right, but mine owne due, which is reuenge vpon false Philipo for his treacherie against my innocent daughter Philomela: Innocent I tearme her, though iniury hath wronged her, and yet I accuse not your Duke or Consiliadorie of iniustice, because their censure past according to the false euidence propounded by periurd Philippo: But I claime iustice without partialitie against him, which if it be granted, I shall highly praise your Senate, and bee euer professt your friend: If it be denied, I am come in armes to defend my daughters innocencie, and with my blood to paint reuenge vpon the gates of Venice. If I speake sharply, blame me not, sith mine honour is toucht with such a blemishe: the discredite of the daughter is a spot in the parentes browe, and therefore if I seeke to excuse her, accuse not me: I do but what honor commands, and nature binds mee to. For prowle that I come not to sanctifie sinne in my daughter, or shadow her scapes with my countenance, I haue brought heere not onely Lutesio but one of their slaues which was by Philippo induced to giue false euidence to affirme as much as I auerre: therefore I onely craue they may bee examined with equitie, and I be satisfied onely in iustice. Thus with his face full of wrath, he sate downe silent: when the Consiliadorie amazed at this briefe and sharpe speeche of the Millanois, began to examine the Genouale, who confest all the treacherie: they hearing this, demanded of Phillippo how he could answere the confession of his Slaue: he smilingly made this scornefull replie. I hope worthie Duke, and honorable Senate of Venice, you will not be

daſht out of countenance with the ſight of weapons, nor be driuen from iuſtice by the noyſe of armour, that though I be an Earl, and am not able to equall the Duke of Milaine in multitudes, yet I ſhall haue as high fauours as he with equitie: in hope whereof I anſwer, that I think there is none ſo ſimple heere, but ſees howe Lutelio conſtrained through enuie, and the Duke compelled by nature, haue ſuborned this pore ſlaue, either by gold or promiſes to receiue what before by ſolemne oath hee heere proteſted. Ye to recouer his former credite, and liberty in his countrey this to ſalue the blemiſhe of his daughters honour: but as ſuch ſlaues minds are to be wrought like ware with euerie faire worde: ſo I aſſure my ſelfe, little beliefe ſhall bee giuen to ſuche a baſe and ſeruile perſon, that commeth to depoſe againſt his own conſcience: this was partner with him in his euidence (pointing to the other Genouaie, and this can affirme what I teſtifie, and therefore I appeale to your equities: for by the verdict of this ſlaue will I be tride.

At this the Duke of Venice called the Genouais forth, and bad him ſpeake his minde. When Lutelio riſing vp charged him, that as he was a Chriſtian, and hoped to be ſaued by his merites, he ſhould impartially pronounce what he knew. At this the Genouaie feeling a horrour, a ſecond hell in his conſcience, trembling as a man amazed, and toucht with the ſting of Gods indgement in his heart, ſtood awhile mute, but at laſt gathering his ſpirites together, and getting the libertie of his ſpæch, falling downe vpon his knées, with his eies ful of teares, he confeſt and diſcourſt the whole circumſtaunce of the Earles villanie intended againſt Philomela: whereat there was a great ſhout in the Senat houſe, and clapping of hands amongeſt the common people: they all for ioy crying Philomela, innocent Philomela. At this the Senatours ſate ſilent, and the Duke of Milaine, vert, and the County Philippo now feeling a dreadful remoſe

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in his conscience vttered these wordes with great resolution. Now doo I proone that true by experience, which earst I held onelye for a bare prouerbe, that trueth is the daughter of tyme: and there is nothing so secrete, but the date of many dayes wil reueal it: that as oyle though it be moist, quencheth not fire: so time though neuer so long, is no sure couert for sin: but as a sparke rakte vp in cinders, will at last beginne to glowe and manifest a flame: so treachery hidden in silence, will burst foorth and crye for reuenge. Whatsoeuer villanie the heart doth worke, in processe of time the worme of conscience wil bewray: oh Senators, this may be applyed to my selfe, whose ielouse head compassed this treason to Philomela, and this tretcherie to Lutesio, the one a most honest wife, the other a moste faithfull frænd.

It booteth little by circumstaunce to discouer the sorrow I conceaue, or little nede I showe my wiues Innocencye, when these base slaues whome I suborned to periure themselues, haue proclaimed her chastity, and my dishonor: suffice it thé, ý I repent though too late, & would make amends, but I haue sinned beyond satisfaction, for there is no sufficient recompence for vniuste slaunder. Therefore in penalty of my periurie towards Philomela I craue my selfe iustice against my selfe, that you would enioyne a pennaunce, but no lesse then the extremitie of death.

At these wordes of Philippo, the people murmured, and the Senate sate a while consulting with themselues, what wer best to doo, at last they referred it to the Duke of Millaine, to giue sentence and censure against Philippo, séing the wrõg was his daughters, and the dishonor his, who béing a man of a milde nature, and full of royal honor in his thoughts, rysing vp with a countenance discouering a kinde of satisfaction, by the submisse repentãce of Philippo, pronounst that the Earle should abyde that penaltie was enioyned to his daughter, which was, that

he should bee banished, that both the Genouayes should haue their libertye, and a thousand Duccats a peece: and that Lutesio should haue his iudgment reuerst, and be restored to his former frædome.

At this censure of the Duke, they all gaue a generall applause, and Philippo there with teares in his eyes, took leaue, protesting to spend his exile contentedly in sæking out of Philomela, and when he had found her, then in her presence to sacrifice his blode as a satisfaction for his Lecherie. Lutesio likewise swore to make a queast for her, and so did the Genouayes, and the Duke her father was as forward, and the Senate broke vpp, and the Duke of Millaine forthwith departed home to his own countrey: where leauing him going homeward, and Philippo, Lutesio, and the Genouais sæking for Philomela:

Once againe to the innocent Lady, who bæing arryued in Palermo, was not onely courteously intertained of the M. of the Shippe, but also of his wife: who noting her modesty, vertue, silence, and other good properties, & rare qualities, was so far in loue with her, that she would not by any meanes let her departe out of her house, but with a simpathie of sweete affectiones, did loue like two sisters, in somuch that Philomela was brought to bedde, and had a yong Sonne, called Infortunatus, because he was borne in the extremitie of his mothers miserie: The M. of the shippe and his wife being pledges of his Christendome: liuing thus obscure, and yet famous in Palermo for her vertues, she found that of all musicke the meane was the merriest, that quiet rested in lowe thoughts, and the safest content in the poorest cottages: that the highest trees abide the sharpest stormes, and the greatest personages the sorest frownes of Fortune: therefore with patience she brookt her homely course of lyfe, and had more quiet slæpes now in the ship-masters house in Palermo, then she had in her pallace in Vennice, onelye her discontent was when she thought on Philippo, that he had

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proued so vnkinde: and on Lutesio, that for her sake hee was so deeply iniuried, yet aswel as she might, she saued these sores, and couered her hard fortunes with the shadow of her innocencye. While thus she liued honorablie in Palermo, not for her excellent behauiour and good qualitie: It fortuned that the Duke of Milaine and Lutesio both disguised like two palmers, had passed thorgh many places to seeke Philomela, and to reduce her from banishment, and at last arryued in Palermo, intending to soiourne there for a while, and then to passe vp to Samagossa, and so thorough all Sicilia, to haue intelligence of the destressed Countesse. While thus they stayed inquiring diligently of her, and not hearing anye newes, sith she was seldome seene abroad, and beside that her name changed and called Absternia.

It chaunced that either by Fortune or destanie, there arryued at the same time in Palermo, the County Philippo Medici, who hauing trauailed thorough diuers countreyes, to finde out his innocent Countesse, wearied at last not so much with trauaile, as with the gnawing worme of a guiltye conscience that still tormented him: he beganne more and more to enter into dispaire, and to thinke his lyfe loathsome vnto him, wishing daylye for death, so it might not come thorough the guilt of his own hand, & yet resoluing rather to bee the murtherer of him selfe, then thus to linger out his daies in dispaire. In this perplexed passion, hee gat him into a thicke groue, there the better to communicat in his melancholie, vowing if hee heard not of Philomela in that cittie, to make that groue the monumēt of his graue: thus desirous of death, or of the recouery of his wife: It fortuned that Arnoldo Frozzo, sonne and heire to the Duke of Palermo, being in loue with a young gentlewoman, whose lodging was distaunt some three leagues from the Cittie, pricked forward by the extremitie of affection, thought to go visite her, although he was not onely forbidden by his father,

but watched, leaſt priuilye he might ſteale vnto her: yet as loue can finde ſtarting hoales, he deuiſed this pollicie: hee carried a ſlaue that remained in his Fathers houſe abroad to the groue with him, where Philippo lay lurking, and there chaunging apparell with him, he got him to his deſired Miſtres, and bad the ſlaue returne couertly into the Cittie, and mæt him the next day at the ſame place: parting thus, as he was going homewarde, hee was met by a young Sicilian gentleman, named Petro Salino: who bearing a mortal grudge to the Dukes ſon, in that he affected the Gentlewoman whome hee ſo tenderly loued: ſeing him alone, and thinking him to bee Arnoldo Strozzo by his apparell, and dæming hee came now from his beloued Miſtres, ſet vpon him, and ſlewe him: and with his rapeir ſo mangled his face, that by no meanes he could be diſcerned, and thereupon fled.

Arnaldos page miſſing his M. ſæking abroad for him in the fieldes, for that he deſired oft times to be ſolitarie, light vpon the dead body of the ſlaue, and iudgeing it to be his M. becauſe he was in his apparell, cried out, & ran home and carried newes therof to the Duke his Father: who as a man diſtraught of his wits, cõmanded ſtraight ſearch to be made, to finde out the actor of the Tragedye, cauſing the dead corps to be conueyed with muche græfe and many teares.

All the Courtiers, gentlemen and others, ſought abroad to ſæke out the author of this murther: and not far of where the ſlaue was ſlain, found Philippo walking vp & downe vntruſt, his hat lying by him, and his rapier in his hand: the courtiers ſæing a mã thus ſuſpitious, made inquirie what he was: why quoth the Countie, I am the man you loke for: Art thou then ſaid the Couſin of Arnaldo, that bloudy traitour, that haſte ſlaine the Dukes ſonne? The Countie glad he had ſo ſwæte an occaſion to be rid of his lyfe, reſolute, and brækely ſaid, I Marry am I, and I will kill his father too, if euer I reache him:

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with that they laide hould vppon him and carried him to prison, and as he went by the way, they examinde what hee was, but that by no meanes hee would reueale vnto them: onely he saidhe was an Italian, purposelye come from Venice to act it. Newes straight was carried to the Duke, that the murtherer was taken, who was highly glad thereof, and resolued the next daye with the states of the countrey, to sit in iudgement: as fame and reporte cannot be silent, so it wasstraight noysed abroad through Palermo, that the Dukes sonne was slaine by a Venetian, and how he was taken, and should the next day be arraigned and executed.

Philomela hearing that hee was a Venetian that had done the dæde: desirous to sée him, toke the Maister of the ships wife with her, and went to the prison, and there by fauour of the Gayler, sawe him through a windowe, assone as Philomela had a viewe of him, she sawe it was Philippo Medici her husband disguised, & hauing in his face the very signes of dispair. This sight of her husband droue her into a maze, yet to conceale the matter to her selfe, she said she knewe not the man. As thus she was standing talking with the Gayler, there came a Venetiã that was resident in Palermo, and desired that he might sée the Gentleman that had done the murther, but the Gayler would not suffer him, but inquired what country man he was: he answered a Venetian, and that is the reason quoth hee, that I am desirous to haue a sight of him. Philomela hearing that he was a Venetian, asked him what newes from Venice: The Gayler, for so hee was, discoursed vnto her what late had chaunced, and amongst the rest, he discouered the fortunes of Philomela and how she was wrongfully accused by her husband the Earle, how her Father came to Venice, and hauing her accusers two slaues examined, they confest the Earle suborned them to the periurie: wherupon Philippo was banished, and now as a man in dispaire, sought about to

finde out his wife.

Philomela hearing these newes, thanking him, toke her leaue of the Sailer and went home, where getting alone into her chamber, she began thus to meditate with her selfe: now Philomela thou maist sæ heauens are iust, and God impartiall, that though he defers, he doeth not acquit: that though he suffer the innocent to be wronged, yet at last hee persecuteth the malicious with reuenge: that time hatcheth trueth, and that true honor maye be blemisht with enuye, but neuer vtterly defaced with extremitie: now is thy lyfe laid open in Venice, and thy fame reuiued in spight of Fortune: now maiest thou triumphe in the fall of thy Ielious husband, and write thy chastitie in the characters of his blode, so shall he die disgraced, and thou returne to Venice as a wonder: Now, shal thine eie sæ his end, that hath sought to ruinate thæ, and thou liue content and satisfied in the iust reuenge of a periured husband.

Oh Philomela, that worde husband is a high tearme easily pronounced in the mouth, but neuer to be banished from the hart, knowest thou not that the loue of a wife must not end, but by death: that the tearme of marriage is dated in the graue, that wyues should so long loue and obey, as they liue and drawe breath: that they should preferre their husbands honor before their owne life, and choose rather to die, then sæ him wronged. Why else did Alcest die for Admetus? Why did Portia eate coales for the loue of Brutus, if it were not that wiues ought to end their liues with their loues?

Truth (Philomela) but Philippo is a traytour, hé hath imblemisht thy fame, sought to ruine thine honour, aimde at thy life, condemnd thæ both to diuorce and banishment, and lastly hath staynde the high honors of thy Fathers house.

And what of all this Philomela? hath not euerie man his fault? Is there any offence so great, that may not bæ

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forgiuen? Philippo did not worke thée this wrong because he loued some other, but because he ouerloued thée: t'was Iealousie, not lasciuiousnes that forst him to that follie: and suspition is incident onely to such as are kind hearted louers. Hath not God reuengde thy iniurie, and thy Father punisht him with the like penaltie that thy selfe doest suffer? and wilt thou now glorie in his misérie? No (Philomela) shew thy selfe vertuous, as ere thou hast béene honorable, and heape coales on his head, by shewing him fauour in extremitie. If he hath slain the Dukes sonne, it is through despaire: and if hee had not come hither to séeke thée, hee had not fallen into this misfortune. The Palme trée the more it is prest downe, the more it sprowteth vp: the Camomill the more it is troden, the swéeter smell it yéeldeth: euen so ought a good wife to be kind to her husband midst his greatest discourtesies, and rather to venture her life, then suffer him incur any preiudice, and so will I doe by Philippo: for rather then hée shall die, in the sight of Philomela I wil iustifie him with mine owne death, so shall my ende bee honorable, as my life hath béene wonderfull.

With this shee ceased and went to her rest, till the nert day morning, that the Dukes, and the states gathered togither to sit in iudgement: whether came Lutesio, and the Duke of Millaine disguised, to sée what he was, that being a Venetian committed the murther, & there also was Philomela, and the saylers wife. At last the County Philippo was brought forth, whome when the Duke of Millaine sawe, iogging Lutesio with his hand, he whispered and said, sée Lutesio, where man fauours, yet God doth in extremitie reuenge: now shal we sée the fall of our enemie, yet not touched with his blode. whispering thus amongest themselues:

At last the Duke of Palermo began to examine him, if he were he that slew his sonne, he answered that hee was the man, & would with his blood answer it: what

moued you saies the Duke, to do the murther: an ouide grudge quoth he, that hath bene betweene him and me euer since he was in Venice, and for that cause reuenge was so restles in my minde, that I came from thence, purposly to act the tragedy, and am not sory that I haue contented my thoughts with his blode: at this his manifest confession, the Duke full of wrath arose and said, it was boteles further to impannell any Jurye, & therefore vpō his words he would pronoūce sentence against him. Then Philomela calling to the Duke, and desiring she might be heard, began thus to plead.

O mighty Duke staye the censure, least thy verdict wrong the innocent, & thou condemne an earle through his owne disparing euidence: I see, and with trembling I feele, that a guiltye conscience is a thousand witnesses. That as it is vnpossible to couer the light of the Sunne with a Curtaine: so the remorse of murther can not be concealed in the closet of the most secrete conspirator.

For standing by, and hearing thee ready to pronoūce sentence against the Innocent, I euen I that committed the deede, though to the exigent of mine owne death: could not but burst forth into these exclamations to saue the sackelesse: Knowe therefore that he which standeth heere before the Judgement seate, is an Earle, though banished: his name is Countie Philippo Medici, my husband, and once famous in Italie, though heere he be blemisht by Fortune: At this, all the companye lokt vpon her. Philippo as a man amazed, stood staring on her face, the tearcs trickling downe his cheeks to see the kindenes of his wife, whome so deerely he had inured: and the Duke of Millaine her Father with Lutesio were in as great a wonder. Last she prosecuted her purpose thus: It were too long worthye Scicilians to rehearse the wronges this Philippo hath vsed against me distressed Countesse, through his extreame iealousie,

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onely let this bréefely suffise, hee suborned his slaues to sweare I was sæne in the act of Adultery: they were beléeued, I deuorced and banished: and héere euer since, I haue liued in contented patience. But since my exile, time that is the reuealer of truth, hath made the slaues bewraye the effect of the matter, so that this present Earle is found guiltye, mine honour saued, he banished, and now extreamly distressed.

Consider then Sicilians, if this County my husband hath offred me such wrong, what reason I had to plead for his lyfe: were it not the guilt of mine owne conscience, forceth to saue the innocent: who in a dispairing humor wearie of his lyfe, confesseth himselfe author of that murther which these handes did execute. I am the womã the infortunate Countesse (Sicilians) who suborned by a Sicilian gentleman, whome by no tortures I will name: first practised by witchcraft Arnaldos death: but seeing that would not preuaile, I sought to méet him alone, which I did yesterday by the groue, and there offring him a humble supplication, and he stouping to take it courteously: I stabd him, and after mangled him in that sort you found him.

This is trueth, this is my conscience, and this I am by God informed to confesse. Then worthie Duke saue the innocent Earle, and pronounce sentence against me the offender. I speake not this in that I loue the Countie, but that I am forst vnto it, by the remorse of mine owne conscience.

Héere she ended, and all they stode amased: and Philippo beganne againe to reply against her, that she did it to saue him: but in vaine were his wordes, for she alledged such probable reasons against her selfe, that the Duke was ready to pronounce sentence against her, and the Duke her father at the point to bewray himself, had it not bæne that Arnaldo Strozzo the Dukes son com-

ming home, and méeting certaine plaine countrimen heard this newes how the Duke was sitting in Judgement against one that had murthered his sonne, which newes as it drove him into a wonder, so it made him haste spœdily to the place, to know the effect of the matter: and he came thither iust at the beginning of Philomelas oration.

Seeing therefore two pleading thus for death, hée himselfe being alyue, and his father ready to condemne the innocent: he commaunded the companye to giue way, came and shewed himselfe, and said: maye it please your grace I am hære, whome these confesse they haue slaine.

At this the Duke start vppe, and all the standers by were in a mase. At last to dryue them out of their dũps, he toulde them that hee thought that the man that was murthered, and taken for him, was a slaue with whome the day before he had changed apparell.

The Duke for ioye to sée his son, was a great while mute: At last hee beganne to examine the matter, why these two did plead themselues guilty? Philippo answered for dispaire, as weary of his lyfe. Philomela said, for the safetie of her husband, chooſing rather to die, thẽ he any wayes sh ould suffer preiudice.

The Sicilians at this, loking Philomela in the face, shouted at her woundrous vertues, and Philippo in a sound betwæne græfe and ioy, was carried awaye halfe dead to his lodging: where he had not lyen two houres, but in an extasie he ended his lyfe. The Duke of Millaine discouered himselfe, who by the Duke of Palermo was highlye intertained.

But Philomela hearing of the death of her husband, fell into extreame passiones, and although Arnaldo Strozzo desired her in marriadge: yet shee returned home to Venice, and there liued the desolate widdow

of

Philomela.

of Philippo Medici al her lyfe: which conſtant chaſtety made her ſo famous, that in her lyfe ſhee was honored as the Paragon of vertue, and after her death ſolemnely, and with wonderfull honor intombed in S. Markes Church, and her fame holden canonized vntil this day in Venice.

FINIS.

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